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ABSTRACT

Thirteen papers have been collected in this book to indicate professional concern about English instruction at all levels and to articulate the role of the teacher, teacher educator, academician, and federal government in changing current English teaching practices. Topics of articles are (1) the intellectual, civic, and ethical responsibilities of the teacher, by Howard Mumford Jones, (2) "What English Institutes Could Be," by Harold Martin, (3) "Encouraging Good Teaching through Institutes," by Donald Bigelow, (4) workshops designed to bring educators and academicians into closer association with public school teachers, by Warner Rice, (5) "Research Programs of the U. S. Office of Education," by Francis Ianni, (6) suggestions for the English professor who requests federal aid for his project, by Kenneth Mildenberger, (7) "The Potential in Potential Dropouts," by Miriam Goldstein, (8) "Teaching the Culturally Disadvantaged," by Daniel Thompson, (9) a remedial summer English program for black college students in Birmingham, by John Monro, (10) "Linguistics in the English Institutes," by H. A. Gleason, Jr., (11) "Grammar and Rhetoric," by Francis Christensen, (12) "All Students Hunger for Great Literature," by Joan Wofford, and (13) "Developing Writing Power in the Elementary School," by Dorothy Saunders. (JB)

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Speaking about Teaching

Papers from
the 1965 Summer Session of the Commission on English

College Entrance Examination Board, New York, 1967

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Preface

With generous help from The Danforth Foundation, the Commission on English of the College Entrance Examination Board sponsored in 1965, August 15-28, a conference concerned with institutes to be supported under the National Defense Education Act, Title XI. It took place at Radcliffe College and Harvard University and was attended by professors of English representing 100 colleges and universities.

Following the conference, the College Board published for the Commission the *Handbook on Summer Institutes in English;* its foreword stated: "The *Handbook* represents a consensus growing out of the participants' experience in Summer Institutes for English teachers and their discussions during the two weeks in Cambridge."

Speaking about Teaching contains a selection of the papers prepared for and delivered during the 1965 conference. Many speakers, as planned by the Commission, went beyond operational problems of institutes to discuss ways of improving instruction. This volume now makes their papers available to all persons interested in teaching and teacher preparation.

Floyd Rinker
Executive Director, Commission on English

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Teaching Alone Is Not Enough

Howard Mumford Jones

I do not wish to make an oration, but merely to observe that from where I sit as president of the Modern Language Association, and as a person long interested in the fortune and fame of the humanities in this country, it seems to me that the responsibilities now laid upon the English teacher, at any level of instruction, are ethically greater than they ever have been before. In fact, of the various branches which we call the humanities, English is the only one that is constantly and widely taught. Up to 1886, when James McCosh retired as president of Princeton, there was a standard philosophy taught in American colleges, the Scottish Common Sense school. Whatever the intellectual virtues and defects of that philosophy may be, it at least laid down clear lines of ethical guidance, and also a somewhat naïve theory of esthetics.

With all due respect to excellent colleagues of mine, it seems to me, at least, to be true that the departments of philosophy have virtually surrendered the burden of instruction which they formerly assumed under the Scottish school of philosophy. They have become technologically expert in things like logical positivism and the analysis of meanings, but on the whole when youth looks for some sort of guidance, some sort of light, they do not now characteristically receive it from the philosophers. There was a time when history was supposed to be moral lesson teaching by example, but the historians likewise have become extraordinarily involved in their own processes; and, to add to the general confusion, they are now exploring the possibility of a Freudian interpretation of the past. A distinguished president of the American Historical Association recently announced in a presidential address that what the historian now needed was a sound knowledge of psychology. Doubtless the historian needs a sound knowledge of a great many things, but I am not altogether certain that irrational psychology is going to help him very much.

Now I submit that it is in the field of English teaching principally (indeed, I am almost tempted to say only) that we have in our present system of education any room for the study of individual responsibility and also ethical responsibility at the secondary school level, in the college, and in the university. I am frank to say that I am not altogether certain that the English profession is discharging its duty in this respect. I think, however, that as the principal humanity, English teaching, and I now refer to literature rather than the language, will require from English teachers in high school, in college, and in the university, a graver sense of both intellectual and civic responsibility than has been characteristic of the last 10 years in our profession.

When I say that, I speak advisedly, for the reason that it seems to me we have fallen into two or three major fallacies. One is the notion that the past, and in turn the present, is indefinitely extensible, that there is no such thing as the past, because the past is merely that which is a kind of a crooked image of the present. The second fallacy is that if we teach something called appreciation, which usually comes out as a vague form of sentimental response, we have fulfilled our duties as teachers. This, of course, is not true. A great masterpiece requires the utmost kind of thinking; it requires what Rossetti called "fundamental brainwork"; and unless we can convince our pupils, our students, and our colleagues that the matter of fundamental brainwork is fundamental to the teaching of English literature or, for that matter, literature in any other language, we shall in my judgment have failed of the duty that is laid upon us by circumstance. And finally, while I am running through the list of fallacies, my final heresy is that teaching is not enough.

Teaching is not enough. Professor John Diekhoff, who has just transferred to Western Reserve University from the University of Michigan, kindly sent me the manuscript of a speech he delivered to a gathering in Ann Arbor, in which he pointed out that the problem of the scholar, the problem of the scholar in the humanities, the problem of the scholar-teacher in English, is not to content himself with teaching, but that the fundamental matter is in learning. A great many years ago Edmund Greenough brought out a book defining scholarship as a learning. It is this process of simultaneously learning and teaching that seems to be the very heart of the matter and that Professor Diekhoff expressed very admirably indeed. If the teacher does not simultaneously give the student or the pupil the notion that he, too, is learning, we're not doing very well in the classroom.

My final suggestion is that not all books are suitable for teen-agers, by which I do not mean to deny the pleasure of reading *Lolita* or *Candy.* But I do wish to deny the notion that teen-agers are at that stage in development where they can study Homer and Aeschylus and draw a comparison between the treatment of Agamemnon in the poem and the drama. This astonishing assignment was laid upon the shoulders of a daughter of a friend of mine, a sophomore in high school, and I implore you to realize that some things should be left for the college world. The high school is not a boiled-down college. And in the selection of texts for the secondary schools, let us once more examine not merely the people whom we are teaching, but also the range of the text and the possibility that it may be just a little over the heads of both the teacher and the class. I myself do not feel quite prepared to compare the treatment of Agamemnon in Homer and Aeschylus; I doubt very much whether this particular high school teacher was any better prepared; and I am certainly assured that the girl was very badly prepared indeed.

I conclude then by insisting that the teaching of English is an intellectual occupation, no less than one which involves the emotions, and that there is laid upon us particularly at this time a burden of ethical explanation such as the profession in my judgment has never faced before.

What English Institutes Could Be

Harold C. Martin

Although most English teachers are presumably familiar with the report of the Commission on English, *Freedom and Discipline in English,* they probably do not know that it is one of two reports. *Freedom and Discipline* is the one the Commission wrote—and rewrote several times, I might add. The other is one that was in our minds and made up a good part of our early discussions. It was never written because what we found as we worked through the first two or three years convinced us that it should not be written, at least not until the first was finished, published, and absorbed. Had we written it first, we would probably have received the kind of publicity accorded to the now-famous mathematics report or to the work stemming from Jerrold Zacharias' original study of the physics curriculum. What we *have* received is less impressive by journalistic standards, but it is really the only kind we sought: the sober response that comes from professional people who recognize that, before they grasp at the stars, they have much work to do where they stand.

If today I choose to talk about the report we only thought and did not write, it is not because I think we made a mistake in publishing the other one but because I think it is time now, using *Freedom and Discipline* as background, to outline what can be built from it. I speak of it because it seems to me that future institutes, now that they are all but assured by the prospect of continuing federal support, will be the places from which significant advances will be made. This is not to say that college English departments, and English departments in elementary and high schools, will be idle. Quite the contrary: new institutes will all be school- or college-sponsored or sponsored by schools and colleges in conjunction, and I have no doubt that what they accomplish will feed directly into the curriculums of both school and college. But they will feed in, not immediately replace; that is, in the foreseeable future, curriculums in English are not likely to be changed from top to bottom, as curriculums in mathematics and physics have been. At least, so it seems to me, primarily because there are not such general pressures or pressing needs for change in English. That may be an arguable proposition, but it is not one casually arrived at or held from inertia or the fear of innovation.

The role of future institutes, as I see it, will be a double one: to provide for those who need it the basic training they lack in studies relevant to their teaching, and to plant the seed for new kinds of study in the schools. Although it is the second I plan to talk about here, I want to make clear that I do not think that the Commission's format for the first is the only one that should be used. Indeed, even in the process of providing basic training it may be necessary, and will in any event be useful, to experiment. The institutes the Commission developed were very largely transmissive, the instructor imparting and the teacher-student absorbing. The pattern is economical, but its economy is short-run; most people learn thoroughly only what they discover or experience, not what they are told. Innovation, then, in the means of producing the needed instruction is a challenge even for those who plan no probings into new matter. Surely, as the sponsoring institutions gain expertness and confidence, these basic institutes should come more to resemble seminars and laboratories than conventional college classrooms, for the learners—whatever their deficiencies—are adults, highly motivated and responsible people. They deserve to be treated as such and will respond best, I think, to treatment as adults.

There is, moreover, no reason that wholly new directions may not in time be introduced into these basic institutes, provided always that a clear view of the main needs is kept in sight. All teachers get weary of repeating themselves, and young instructors especially are often strongly moved to push ahead without much regard for assuring that basic competences are achieved before—or, at least, at the same time as—departures are tried. On the whole, in my opinion, English teachers often pride themselves unduly on being unconventional, getting out of the rut, bypassing all the "dull stuff." Such eagerness is understandable but it is seldom excusable: for every one who tries it and succeeds in really improving the literacy of his students, nine will gain excitement at the expense of competence. The trouble is that they will often be abetted by their students, during and after instruction, on the grounds that the excitement counted for more in their lives than competence. It is hard to argue against such a response, and I do not wish to suggest that the sense of having participated in something new and daring is unimportant. But I don't think the implied principle holds up. Teachers hear of the successes but seldom hear anything about the failures; the latter someone else has to deal with in the succeeding years. In the main, if experience means anything at all, the instructors must rely on responsibility and order for their groundwork and take as special reward whatever talent is able to add to that. What I am urging is that a summer spent cataloguing local dialects, whatever excitement it engenders, is specious activity unless the students have some solid perspective on language before they start. Nor will a summer on translations of Oriental literature add what it should to a teacher-student's understanding unless he comes to it with solid acquaintance of literature in languages he knows by habit and a reasonably good grasp of critical premises and practices.

Once good basic learning is assured, however, whether by previous institutes or by careful screening of those admitted to a program, the way should be open for studies of many kinds. The most obvious direction is toward depth, toward learning more and more about some matter of central importance—moving, for instance, from cursory acquaintance with most of Shakespeare to a genuine command of the canon, moving from the purely literary acquaintance with that to the history of its interpretation, its centuries of staging, its relationship to other drama of its own and subsequent periods, and so on. To cite a pattern from another field: I have watched this summer in Union College one of the very few National Science Foundation institutes that have developed a consecutive program extending over three years and leading, for those who survive, to a master's degree. Those institutes began where most will begin, with whatever the teacher-students brought in the way of knowledge and skill. The teachers who are being graduated this summer will deserve their degrees and compare favorably with young men and women receiving the same award after a year in regular graduate school, and they will be taking back to their classrooms a fund of knowledge and a sophistication about science quite beyond what any of them thought necessary or even possible three years ago when they began.

Whether that is the best direction for second-stage institutes in English, I am not sure. But at the present time the sequences, as they are called, in English are more often arbitrary than not, one thing placed after another in order to make sure that all are covered, rather than one thing leading to or out of another because it has an intrinsic necessity to precede or follow. Research now going forward may help to clarify intrinsic relationships, but the plain fact is that most of the subject matter is not now grounded, as far as sequence goes, on much more than tradition and rough guesses about which kind of learning should precede or follow. It is even possible that, by its nature, the subject matter of English is not sequential in any such degree as subject matter in some of the sciences. Nobody knows that it isn't, but nobody knows that it is.

Until someone finds out, the direction that seems more promising is not one in depth but one in breadth, in reattaching what is called English to the other subjects of study with which it has close affinity. All teachers, whatever their subject, are inclined to compartmentalize. They do it partly to keep sanity, partly because the flesh is weak and energy is not endless. But, whatever the reasons and however much they may be justified, teachers are all aware from time to time that the core they teach has penumbrae they want and need to penetrate, making light out of those darknesses. In exactly the same sense that the scientist says his study is about nature, English teachers must say that theirs is about man. They cannot comprehend all of man in their study, but they cannot soberly ignore everything but the words he has uttered if they have any hope of understanding and properly valuing those words. Like fingerprints, words reveal their users and, unless a person submits to the fallacy of the closed context, he will always have, at the very least, a vigorous curiosity about the source. There is no worse enemy to the general education of the mind, it seems to me, than the isolation of product from origin. No one doubts that some kinds of expertness can be developed by the isolation, and in a technological age it may be argued that that is exactly what ought to be developed. But in the measure that teachers are concerned with cultivation of the mind, they consent to such a goal at grave peril. If they aim at anything, it is at largeness of understanding. For that end many kinds of expertness may be needed, and teachers would be wrong to ignore their part of the responsibility to provide them. But no number of special kinds of competence will of themselves automatically produce the wholeness that is needed, and teachers are therefore obligated to do whatever they can to find, and exploit, the lines that lead to wholeness, the lines of connection between their central, but tiny, part of man's whole nature and all the other ways in which he reveals what he is.

The danger in sticking to the text and looking at nothing else is that of pedantry, the divorce which I have already described. The danger of trying to do anything else is also great: because there are almost no limits to what can be done, inadequacy or even flat failure will dog the hunter's steps. And, for the unwary or the egocentric or the simpleminded, the likelihood of easy extrapolation, vapid generalizing, gross sentimentality, empty moralizing—to say nothing of sheer error--is enough to scare off all but the lionhearted. Yet that "doing something else" is the doing that is most important, and teachers should not hesitate to be about it.

To get from this plane to the plane of practice is to run like chance of error and folly, but I shall not duck the responsibility, having staked out my claim. Even so, what I can add will be primarily suggestive and rather general. The classroom is always the crucible in which the elements must be mixed and the temperature controlled. The platform can hardly be more than argument and illustration, and these two things I am trying to provide.

Consider, first, the example I used earlier, that of an institute to deepen the teacher's knowledge of Shakespearean drama. What would an institute be like that took the other tack, trying to broaden the range of reference instead? The most immediate way might be to take the plays off the written page for the course of a summer, put the teaching into the hands of a man who knows Shakespeare on the boards. What he could do, even if he had nothing but a classroom to work in—though that would seem an austerity to be avoided—might well radically alter his students' understanding of what they had taught for years as if they knew it. If the theater in this country is moribund—and who would deny that it is nearly that?—the fault may lie not simply with moving pictures, television, and the beach but with the failure to treat plays as plays rather than as poems or snatches of fictional dialogue. A good man of the kind needed for such work may be hard to find and even harder to dragoon into an institute, I'll admit. But what is to prevent making use of the summer theaters that flourish on many campuses to work out an institute that combines the usual kind of study with attendance at rehearsals and active participation in the complex procedures of production?

Such a thing may have been tried, but I do not know of it. It is, at any rate, a very mild departure from the ordinary and so obvious a departure that the wonder may be that it is not tried in dozens of places every summer. To move from study of the written word to study of those words in the context for which writing is only a partial accommodation is no more daring a decision than that to give swimming lessons in the water instead of on land. It is a larger step to move from traditional drama to those not-so-recent but almost unexplored forms provided by television and moving pictures.

The objection that will come to a questioning mind at once is that the materials of these media are hard to come by—and they are. But they are hard to come by principally because teachers have not developed their own sense of need for them. Even on small college campuses today the science laboratories are jammed with sparkling equipment: autoclaves, oscilloscopes, small accelerators, computers. They are there not simply because money is available but because the people who use them recognize their worth, build their courses to take advantage of them, and argue the funds out of the budget. What is needed for study of television and moving pictures—and I shall not even pause to argue that the study is important—will not be obtained until English teachers show that they know what to make of the equipment they ask for. Anyone who wants to see what imagination and energy can do along such lines should visit the Phillips Academy at Andover. There, because two or three teachers were convinced that the ugliness people live with and even manufacture in their environment comes from lack of sophistication about seeing, a program for teachers—not teachers of art, but teachers of many subjects—has changed scores of them from optical dullards into excited purveyors of Blake's old axiom that man sees not through the eyes but with the mind.

Mention of the Andover program provides a good opportunity for reiterating my earlier warning about vague and ill-informed extrapolations. In desperation I have more than once tried to reach out from the text toward the fine arts by means of bulletin boards and slides, and I suppose all English teachers have done so, too. It is better than nothing, but not much, because it is only a seeing through the eye. What is needed is something much deeper, and that is what Andover tries to provide: the same kind of awareness about what the intrinsic character of art is that is expected about the intrinsic character of literature. The analogues are there waiting for discovery and exploitation. And, equally important, the differences are there, too. But neither can be brought to the enlightenment of students unless there is developed a more intelligent mental activity about art than what is necessary for pinning up a New England landscape when Whittier's "Snowbound" is taught.

The same point can be made about music. A certain amount of musical terminology has been adopted for the purposes of literary criticism but that does not lead far because critical vocabulary in all the arts is highly metaphorical and therefore quite imprecise in its various applications. Historically, rhyme had a living relationship with recitation, accompanied and unaccompanied. Eliot's *Four Quartets* were not idly named. But it is the rare teacher of literature who knows enough about music even to appreciate the nature of the songs interspersed through Shakespeare's plays, let alone enough to know whether the score for a moving picture is subtly ironic in its relationship to what the screen shows and the sound track says or is just souped-up Strauss. Again, what is needed is not simply a list of the poems that Schubert used for his *lieder* but some genuine penetration into musical form and a seeking for those reverberations of the human spirit that have found an outlet other than words.

Another line out from the teaching of literature leads toward studies of man as a social being. I am not talking about that endlessly stereotyped and lifeless stuff called "socialist realism," but about the simple fact that much literature is a mirror held up to man in his habitat. An institute that took for one part of its work a study of some "realistic" literature would appreciably enhance its teaching, in my judgment, if it made provision for some serious instruction in economics and history—not random courses culled from the catalog of those available, but lectures and readings and discussions carefully correlated with the literature under study. One reason there is so little realistic literature in school curriculums may be that teachers unconsciously feel their inadequacy in dealing with it.

An equally strong case can be made for exploring the significant relations between literature and psychology. There has been enough critical writing on the relationships, heaven knows, and much of it starts from the grave error of treating literature as raw clinical data. But excesses are to be expected everywhere, and they do not invalidate principle. Teachers, moreover, constantly traffic in psychological judgments whether they admit it or not: a character seems "unreal," a situation "contrived." Now, admittedly, there are literary canons for such judgments, one of them being that of internal consistency, but it is less than perceptive to think that authors themselves are indifferent to what human beings really think and do, and the canons that come from life therefore have relevance.

None of what I have said so far about institutes for broadening study should be construed as prescription for the teaching to be done in the schoolroom. What the institutes should be after is the broadening of people who teach; only they can make the translations into practice. The heresies involved in suggesting that institutes not be kept simon-pure I willingly court because I believe that a cultivated man is a greater being than an esthete and that the hope of the institutes should be to develop cultivated men and women for teaching.

To talk about directions for institutes in composition is, in a sense, to turn the glass upside down. In literature, the sources are inferred from the product; in composition, the source is present but, ordinarily, only some small portion of the product. Most of the compositional portions of institutes I know anything about have been primarily concerned with getting teachers to write approximately as well as freshmen in college. If that is where institutes have to start, well and good; it is even possible that instructors may learn to teach freshmen better for having taught their teachers. But it is surely no place to stop, not unless we are willing to consider the freshman's skill at composition a consummation devoutly to be wished. What a solid course in theories of style, or one in the philosophy of rhetoric, might do to a teacher's power to express himself I would not guess; what it might do to his perspective on the writing of those he taught I should think largely wholesome. Any such program would have to be selective, of course; indeed, I suspect that a single aspect of style—"invention," for example—might be coupled with study of literature to the great advantage of both. The obvious links between composition and the study of language have inspired some experimentation in institutes already, but I doubt that we have done more than scratch the surface. The vexed problem of usage, which takes up an inordinate amount of the time of most composition teaching, can only be properly approached through historical investigation of language, and one relief to be gained from an institute that concentrated on such an approach might well be not only saner perspective on diction and grammar but recognition that, if a composition program is really to take hold, it must get past those matters to the spirit that lives and breathes in the writer. How much is really known about the nexus beween imaginative, argumentative, and expository writing—not the formal characteristics peculiar to each but the contiguities and congruences that, again, bespeak the mind of the writer? How seriously has any program for teachers tried to explore the basic alterations over the past three decades in style so evident in good modern prose of all three kinds? Even in a relatively unimportant matter like punctuation, the changes are significant. (I think it was Dorothy Richardson, the author of a many-volumed novel, who argued that proper feminine prose should be without punctuation at all, like Molly Bloom's 50 pages of thought near the end of Joyce's *Ulysses.* I'm not recommending unpunctuated prose as a principle, only noting there's room for study.)

Of such matters—as of that other leg of the tripod, language, about which I shall say nothing because I have nothing fruitful to say, the amount of activity in that field speaking for itself—more might be argued, but what I have suggested to this point should be enough. I would summarize all of it by emphasizing that it is intellectual penetration into the reasons for, assumptions about, and connections between these matters that should be the main concern in future institutes. No institute teacher can teach all that needs to be learned, any more than any teacher in the schoolroom can teach everything about his subjects. But both can plow ground and sow seeds and pray for rain.

One aspect of the traditional English program is all but ignored in the report of the Commission on English, and the omission continues to haunt me. I refer to the rather casual manner in which we disposed of oral delivery. As soon as I say the word "delivery," teachers will understand what we were shying away from—all those wearying efforts to create classroom activity that will have some resemblance to nature and yet provide decent discipline in speech. One of the most respected scholars in English literature addressed himself to that matter alone in his valedictory talk to a national meeting, arguing that not until the practice of requiring memorization is reinstated will anything like decency, let alone eloquence, be evident in the oral efforts of students. Even from so eminent a man, the advice made most listeners squirm with embarrassment, and I am puzzled to know why, though I was as embarrassed as the others.

Heaven knows, most students are voluble enough. And I have not noticed many hesitating to express an opinion. But there seems to be something inexpressibly artificial about even the most informal teaching patterns—panels and the like. The trouble may be that teachers really don't have in their own minds any criteria for speech nearly so clear-cut as those they have for teaching literature, composition, or language. The criteria are not lacking, of course; rhetoric, after all, is based on consciousness of audience, a first concern of the speaker. But the way is certainly open for exploration, and while I have nothing to offer but some rhetoric of my own, I would readily use it to urge that someone somewhere soon bring his wits to bear on solving a problem the Commission left untouched.

So much for the patterns all teachers know enough about to be able to invent within and around them. Should institutes stop there? Anyone might reasonably argue that they will have all they can do for the foreseeable future to get even respectably ahead with the work implicit in these traditional fields. Yet many may feel, as I do, that as long as there are other problems to be solved, institutes should be designed to face them and try to solve them. Teachers from the rural South, the urban North, or counties or states with a high density of impoverished people know that what the schools have traditionally done is not enough. For reasons that are very complex, the English program in such areas, beyond the stage of training for simple literacy, is ordinarily a hand-me-down from the instruction given 50 years ago in schools of entirely different character. The sheer human waste that results becomes every day more apparent as students from those areas filter out of their confines to live and study and work with others who have not suffered the same unimaginative schooling. One of the most remarkable women I know, herself a Negro supervisor of English in a city school system where 80 percent of the students are Negroes, has told me that the hardest thing she has had to do in her life is to break through the imitativeness and syllabus-obsession of her teachers—most of *them* Negro—so that they can actually hear and read the language and experience of the children they teach. But the problem isn't confined to Negroes, children, or teachers.

A few years ago a group of men in the admissions office at Harvard College dreamed up a project for bypassing—"supplementing" would be a kinder word, perhaps, but not so accurate—such teachers by operating a giveaway bookmobile driven by a lively and imaginative teacher and circulating through two counties of the back hills in a mid-southern state. Just when it seemed ready to start, the project fell through, through no fault of theirs or of the man who had agreed to foot the bill. It was picked up a year later by some students at Harvard, modified to suit their more limited plans and even more limited experience at teaching, and introduced into parts of the Boston school system. No miracles have occurred, but the program has grown larger and, having received at first a rather cautious welcome, has now won praise and some competition for its inclusion elsewhere in the city.

This project points clearly to the possibilities for new tactics in helping to educate youngsters for whom books would otherwise mean nothing more than the texts, most of them shabby and many of them ancient, that are lent for the term from school storerooms. It wasn't just the free books that did the trick in Boston; it was the use made of them and the kinds of books they were. The combination was enough to create an environment in which, for an appreciable number of children, reading became an activity eagerly looked forward to. There are, of course, many in the profession who know a great deal about children's literature, but there is pitiful little evidence that their knowledge has seeped down to most elementary school classrooms, especially in those places where the need is greatest. Even where the need is not so great, or does not seem to be—in affluent suburban communities, for example—the quality of literature purveyed to elementary school children would make even Louisa May Alcott weep. Uplift, coyness, unction, numbing tedium, everything but the spark of imagination: Caesar's Gallic wars in Latin are high excitement alongside most of what is found in elementary readers. And the terrible thing is that there is no excuse for the dullness. The plain fact is that the books in use are written by the wrong people, even by the wrong kind of people. The problem exists in other countries as well. Five years ago, an Italian scholar and writer, teaching in this country, set out to translate from a dozen languages into his native tongue poems of high quality that had, as he tried them out on children, the power to move and excite the young. He died before the collection was published, but I believe that of all his writing that volume, now circulating briskly in Italy, meant most to him because it struck directly at the heart of what his life was about, love for the life that lies in chiseled thought.

Here, too, it seems to me, is a prospect for another kind of institute, one that sets out deliberately to find and bring together, under a master craftsman, teachers who write and have neither audience nor critic to give them help. Nor need one fear duplication. The writers' conferences that dot the countryside in the summer months are not for the likes of them. If most teachers are to be given the attention they need, and sometimes it is only attention they need, an entirely different atmosphere from that of the usual writers' conference must be provided.

Lest I be accused of going from the unlikely to the impossible to the absurd, I want to mention a thoroughly practical matter that offers ample work for a score of institutes. For nearly a decade there has been more and more talk about "independent study" wherever teachers are meeting or school superintendents are presenting arguments for new buildings. The term has come to cover everything from what used simply to be called "homework" done in study hall to genuinely advanced and solitary explorations. As the term gains public acceptance, it is bound to become an appendage every curriculum must grow. Like the so-called "senior research theme," which became in most places the most barren kind of exercise, as much productive of bad habit as good, the promotion of independent study will be sheer malpractice, a bilking of students and public alike, if the "independence" is not based on good training in the procedures of exploration and if the "study" is not intelligently focused. Some part of the necessary knowledge has to do with library resources, simple research techniques, and so on. But a much larger part has to do with the processes of thought. It is silly to expect students either to accept or take issue with the sources they investigate unless they have learned, by repeated experience with simple exercises, to look for premises, analyze arguments, separate relevant from irrelevant data, and recognize evasion and unwarranted extrapolation. And those things most cannot do, although the brightest ones learn to by living, I suppose, without being *taught* to do them. In frustrated moments, I've dreamed of building a whole course around the enthymeme, the missing element in argument that accounts for half the world's bad logic and most of its ignorant passions. Perhaps someone can devise an institute that will at least make meticulous reasoning a counterweight to the fanciful refutations and arguments that pass for research in most students' labored presentations. In an age of polls and surveys covering every subject from sex habits to the consumption of peanut butter, some attention to the intricacies and fallibility of human reason would not be amiss.

The late Robert Hillyer once described a mutual acquaintance as a man "infinitely atrabilious." Everything else has been hurled into the infinite recently, so I suppose bile has a place there, too. But I would not have anyone think that whatever asperity I have shown proceeds out of a disposition to see the world with jaundiced eyes or a conviction that the milk is already soured beyond reclaim in the educational creameries. It is precisely because I think there is good hope that institutes can materially improve the life, the lot, and the performance of teachers that I come down so hard on obvious failures. No one knows, of course, what those awful bureaucrats in Washington—of whom I am one, by membership on two of the money-granting committees—will consider worth sponsoring as an institute. But it is true that money will not continue indefinitely to flow to institutes that do no more than copy what has been tried over and over again. Quite properly, the United States Office of Education wants the money it has to account for to be seed money, money to start new growth which, if it proves good, the regular sources of funds will tend in subsequent years. There is, I would say, a better chance every year that something new, if it is well thought out and backed by good staff, will get favorable attention.

Newness is not goodness. If I seem to put a premium on novelty it is only because I am convinced that the possibilities inherent in the matter and the skills taught by English teachers must be developed much more fully.

The simplest, bluntest truth about teachers, wherever they are and whomever they teach, is that they can only teach what they know and what they are. And, since the laws of entropy operate in them as in other natural forces, they can teach only a part of that. The pitiful condition of those who know too little and have also made little of themselves is that they must either resort to routines prescribed by others or take refuge in systems of one kind or another—the so-called "new criticism" being one of the latter that has had much favor in recent years. In the end, the crucial test of any system or plan may be what corruptions it readily lends itself to, for corruptions there will be, in almost exact proportion to the ignorance of the purveyor and the burden of work he carries. It is for that reason imperative that what is done in institutes bear down heavily not on formulas or pedagogical procedures, but on the liberal education of the teacher-student himself.

I remember attending a summer session at the University of Wisconsin some 25 years ago and going to an evening session sponsored by the English department for high school teachers. It was a painful evening because it was so earnest and obtuse. But we were polite guests—all but one, who finally had the courage to say, "Why do you talk about what we should be doing in the schools where we teach? We know the classrooms better than you do. The only thing you can give us is some refreshment for our souls."

That bold fellow was right. Feeble students will grab hold of anything that looks like a formula. Good ones will resist or ignore it. A really good institute for teachers, I believe, must refuse the easy route for the feeble—even if what it offers can do nothing for them. It must refresh the souls of those who know they have souls in need of refreshment.

Such refreshment is not primarily a matter of more reading, more writing, more assimilation of any matter, though adding to the store is always important. It is primarily a matter of intellectualizing, in the best sense, what is already possessed. It is a matter of throwing such light as living provides on the human efforts to describe living, not the sociologizing of literature but the humanizing of it, not the psychologizing of composition but the putting of honesty and penetration before decorum.

An institute, in short, ought to be a place in which fresh winds blow or in which the winds that blow are, at least, fresh for those who attend. The implication is that institute directors will have to abandon egalitarian notions about membership and make special efforts to recruit for the institutes people who carry enough sail to take advantage of whatever wind is blowing.

Now in saying this, I want to make clear that nothing easy is being proposed. One home truth about institutes is that some have been much less good than the teacher-students enrolled in them. Tail-enders have been assigned, or captured, to teach in them, and what they taught was what they had left over from spring. Or so their teacher-students report, and they should be fairly expert at measuring what they witness.

If I argue for increasing selectiveness in admission, it is not in order to make institutes easier to operate. It is, rather, to raise the quality and reputation of institutes, first, so that leading members of the faculty will be willing to teach in them, and, second, so that what is taught may be respectable in ways it rarely is at present. The institutes should be not simply refreshing, but refreshing to the soul and to the capacity men have for seeing to the heart of things and responding to what they see there.

No matter how widely federal and private money is spread, institutes will never reach more than a small proportion of the teaching body. All the more reason then for drawing to institutes not the least well-prepared and the least intelligent but those who have talent, ability, or preparation that mark them out as people who may lead others. Four thousand of *them* every summer for a few summers could materially alter the climate. Four thousand people with little to give and not much to get with almost certainly would profit from institutes, but few of them would be of much profit to others.

Deepen, broaden, extend, limit—whatever the course, the important thing is to get past pedagogy, "skills," or mere accumulation to central concern with inquiry, speculation, and probing into whatever is presented for examination. There is no virtue by its nature in attaching economics or history or a theory of vision to the English program. The only reason for doing so is to increase one's power to see anew what one has been looking at for years. If an institute can refresh a teacher's sight, it will prove to be more liberating than most of what is now called the liberal arts.

The English Professor and the U.S. Office of Education

Kenneth W. Mildenberger

In this discussion I do not intend to deal with planning for the substantive content of an English institute, a subject which is receiving much consideration elsewhere; nor shall I enter into the detailed technical aspects of developing a proposal for an institute, since these are explained in detail in the United States Office of Education publication, *A Manual for the Preparation of Proposals,*[1] and staff members from the Office can answer specific questions. Rather, I wish to develop a number of points that I hope will bring into proper focus matters that have sometimes led to unnecessary misunderstandings between the English professor and the Office of Education institute program. I refer specifically to the professor of English who is interested in preparing a request or proposal for federal financial support under provisions of Title XI of the National Defense Education Act. However, these remarks have general relevance for any professors who plan to prepare institute proposals, whether they wish to have institutes in English, reading, modern foreign language, history, or one of the other areas of study.

The United States Office of Education was created by Congress in 1867, mainly to collect and disseminate statistics and facts to show the condition and progress of education. At present the Office is a constituent agency of the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare. During the past half-dozen years the Office has been moving toward a more vigorous concept of its mission, paralleling increasing acceptance by the citizenry and Congress of the role of the federal government as a significant agent for strengthening American education. In 1962 a modest realignment of existing units reflected this trend. This spring President Lyndon B. Johnson, taking note of the vast dimensions of newly enacted and pending programs of financial aid to education, appointed a White House task force to reexamine the administrative organization and procedures of the Office and to recommend changes. The result was a drastic reorganization plan which was put into effect on July 1, 1965.

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[1] *Summer 1966; Academic Year 1966-67.* Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, 1965, 64 pp.

Commissioner of Education Francis Keppel has summarized the modern purpose of the Office succinctly: "The primary task that faces the Office of Education is to identify as accurately as possible the needs and weaknesses of American education, to propose ways and means for overcoming those needs and weaknesses, and to play its part in mobilizing the Nation's resources toward solutions and improvements."

The recent reorganization is aimed principally at improving the administrative functioning of the Office in the pursuit of this purpose. But whatever organizational changes are made now or in the future, fundamental matters concerned with the management of an educational funding authority such as the NDEA institute program are not likely to alter, and it is with these matters that the professor becomes involved. It would probably be helpful to take a quick look at what happens when Congress passes legislation such as that authorizing English institutes. The Office of Education finds itself with a relatively few lines of statutes which must be implemented into a responsible, functioning program. The law is translated into action along the following lines.

1. Basic professional and fiscal policies must be formulated and codified. What is "English"? Does it include "literature" or "speech"? Since an institute participant is entitled to $15 per week for each dependent, what is a "dependent"? Advice on legal and fiscal questions can be provided by Office of Education experts, but answers to the professional English questions can be obtained only with competent advice from outside the government. This fact in turn raises other questions. Which problems and policies require such extramural review, and how can suitable consultants be identified? What plan should be followed to insure periodic extramural review of policies?

2. A calendar of cyclical procedures must be developed quickly. Steps

must be taken to inform nearly 2,000 eligible institutions that funds will be available for English institutes. A manual of instructions must be prepared, and ideally it should be so detailed that further inquiries are reduced to a minimum. A deadline for proposals must be arrived at, and arrangements made for appraisal of proposals. The final national slate of institutes must be arranged and institutions informed. Publicity must be set in motion to advise several hundred thousand school teachers of English everywhere of their new opportunities for advanced study. Then, as the Office of Education proceeds to the vital business of counseling the new institute directors in their complex responsibilities and in the specifics for revising proposals so that contracts may be signed, the inevitable backlash arrives from unsuccessful proposal writers and must be answered.

3. Forms of all kinds must be developed, cleared through channels, and printed. These include the so-called contract boiler plate, application forms for teachers, dependency claim forms, fiscal reporting forms, and so forth.

4. After institutes are announced and contracting has moved along, much routine communication takes place with institute directors. Most of this is of a nonprofessional nature, aimed at the smooth operation of institutes within the framework of technical requirements of government contracting. Frequent broadsides remind the directors of tasks they must perform, call attention to new policy rulings, and explain how to proceed in situations not anticipated in previous instructions. A staggering volume of correspondence and telephoning develops.

5. Efforts must be made to plan and implement surveillance of the institutes. Having accepted the promise of the proposal and committed considerable public funds, the Office of Education should provide some means for on-site evaluation.

6. Meanwhile all the aggravating, time-consuming housekeeping problems that are intrinsic to operations within the super-complicated matrix of the federal government must be contended with.

Consider also that in addition to English institutes the Office of Education deals with institutes for teachers of reading, history, geography, and modern foreign languages, teachers of environmentally disadvantaged youth, as well as school librarians, educational media specialists, and counseling and guidance personnel. In the reorganized Office of Education, administration of all of these institute programs is placed in the new Division of Educational Personnel Training, along with several other related activities. It is just one of 17 line divisions in the Office. Funds authorized for institutes constitute a relatively insignificant fraction of the total Office appropriation, which also covers school and higher education construction programs, vocational education and library services, graduate fellowships, loans and work-study opportunities for college students, strengthening of schooling for the poor, research and experimentation of all kinds, foreign studies activities, civil rights programs, and so forth.

Nevertheless, the Office knows that the English institute program, if effectively implemented, will result in fundamental improvements in the educational system and indeed in American life. The few individuals in the Office of Education who are concerned full-time or in part with English institutes are eager to see that appropriated funds are wisely and effectively dispensed. They know that they are dependent upon professors of English education for the successful fulfillment of this means that Congress has afforded to strengthen the quality of English teaching in the schools. They know, as must those who teach, that the program will succeed only to the extent that departments of English in colleges and universities will contribute both competence and understanding in the years ahead. To put it another way, the bright hope of this program is really in the hands of the private sector, not the Office of Education, and if the chance is muffed the blame must be shared by both.

I should like to discuss several matters which, if properly understood, may forestall some of the questions that professors might otherwise raise.

A. *The professional competence and sophistication of the Office of Education review of proposals should not be underestimated.*

The reason is simple; the proposals are read, evaluated, and rated by members of a panel of a professor's peers, specialists in English education from colleges, universities, schools, and even state departments of education. Last year a panel of 34 persons, under the chairmanship of John Gerber of the University of Iowa, engaged in this task, working together in Washington. The ratings of this group, with only a few minor adjustments for equitable geographic and demographic distribution, were the basis for the 105 English institutes conducted this summer. Quality and the promise of success were the basic considerations in rating proposals.

How is such a panel of consultants selected? Last fall John Fisher, executive secretary of the Modern Language Association, and James Squire, executive secretary of the National Council of Teachers of English, were invited by the Office of Education to nominate participants for an initial conference to draft professional guidelines for the new English institute program. Participants in that conference were in turn asked to develop a roster of persons who might review proposals. Insofar as possible, the panel was assembled with a view to both geographic and institutional representativeness. Each year there will be a significant turnover in membership to insure broad and fresh representation.

In view of this procedure for extramural review of proposals, I advise that the Office of Education *Manual for the Preparation of Proposals* be studied seriously. The part on evaluation of proposals lists the basic criteria that the review panel applies. Members of the panel can make judgments only on the basis of information that is provided in the proposal; they can assume nothing. They rate the proposal, not the reputation—or lack of reputation—of the proposer or of the institution involved.

B. *It must be remembered that each proposal is in competition with many others for support out of limited federal funds.*

In 1964, the first rushed year of the NDEA English institute program, with hardly a month between receipt of guidelines for preparing a proposal and the deadline for submission, colleges and universities submitted 258 English proposals. Of these, 105 were selected for support, at a cost of slightly more than $5.5 million. Undoubtedly a number of additional proposals could have been supported with satisfactory results. In 1965, the second year, it is not overly optimistic to expect from 400 to 500 English proposals. How many will be supported depends upon the number of acceptable proposals and the amount of institute funds that the Commissioner of Education will decide to allocate for English. It is not likely that he will make this decision until the proposals for NDEA institutes of all types have been reviewed. Title XI of NDEA authorizes $32,750,000 annually for nine types of institutes: English, English as a foreign language, modern foreign languages, reading, history, geography, teachers of disadvantaged youth, school librarianship, and educational media. How the annual appropriation will be allocated among these fields must be determined by the Commissioner, and Commissioner Keppel has wisely ruled that each year the determination will be made anew on the basis of current circumstances and with no special reference to the allocations of the previous year.

In any event, the point to be remembered is that proposals will far exceed any reasonable expectation of available funds. Failure to receive support, while understandably disappointing, will unfortunately be all too common. But more about disappointments later.

C. *The originator of a proposal should not let his imagination be dampened.*

Quite deliberately, the *Manual for the Preparation of Proposals* states in the Introduction that the guidelines are "not intended to restrict institutions in the development of institute programs nor to preclude proposals which embody novel or creative concepts. Proposals may be made for institutes which neither follow precedent nor entirely conform to stated policies. But, while imagination and innovation are encouraged, a proposal must be allowable under existing legislation and must offer reasonable promise of achieving its stated goals."[2]

In a program of this kind, the danger constantly exists that after a few years all proposals will gravitate toward one or more of the tried and true institute formats. Of course many hundreds of good standard institutes are needed in the years ahead. But there must also be continual experimentation with auspicious new ways of doing things, ways that may be equally effective, or even better. A professor with a new idea would be well advised to explain his idea in a detailed letter to the director of the Division of Educational Personnel Training in order to insure that it is statutorily feasible. For reasons which must be clear by now, no one in the Office of Education could be expected to predict the chances for acceptance of an unusual, or usual, proposal; but the professor may rightly inquire as to its legality. If it is legal, the rest will depend upon the preparation of a convincing proposal for the panel of reviewers.

D. *A proposal cannot be prepared in a vacuum.*

The professor who proposes himself as an institute director should, of course, be the person who creates the substantive education plan for the institute and writes the proposal. But he can hardly work in isolation. On the local scene he must enlist the cooperation of his institutional bureaucracy, which sometimes is a good deal more formidable than any in Washington.

The Office of Education sends its annual invitation to submit institute proposals not to faculty members but to the institutional president. As chief executive, he must decide, by whatever procedures he employs, whether he wants his institution to apply for one or more NDEA institutes and, if he does, in which fields proposals will be prepared. A proposal must be approved by him or his appointed designee if it is to be considered by the Office of Education. If the proposal is accepted by the Office a contract is made with his official administration, which then becomes legally responsible for implementation of the contract.

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[2] *Ibid.*, p. 2.

The drafter of the proposal must also gain the collaboration of the appropriate campus office (business, financial, contracting, or whichever) for technical assistance with budgetary items, and he must insure that the logistics of the proposed institute (instructional facilities, dormitory space, dining and health services, and so forth) will be available.

Additionally, the professor ought to possess a familiarity with the world in which school teachers of English must work—the administrative structure, the practices, curriculums, and materials of elementary and secondary education. Such familiarity can be developed only at first hand through visits to school systems and classrooms and by participation in professional meetings of school teachers at the local, state, and regional levels. A great deal of enlightenment can be generated from discussions with appropriate officers in the department of education of the professor's state. Every state department has an official whose title is some variant of "director of teacher education," and many states have one or more supervisors of English or language arts. The NDEA institute program offers a substantial new bridge for developing better understanding and useful working relations between the college and school worlds.

Finally, the professor ought to be abreast of professional developments in the English-teaching field through membership and participation in national organizations, in particular the National Council of Teachers of English and the Modern Language Association. Yet the number of college-level members of the NCTE is disappointing, and the proportion of English department chairmen who belong to the MLA is a sad measure of professional responsibility. Both these associations expended vast effort to help justify the case for federal financial support for English institutes, and they are collaborating in many ways to promote improved English instruction.

E. *Restraint and common sense should be exercised in appeals to Congressmen and Senators.*

Since public funds are involved in this competitive grant program, some institutional officials and professors seek to enrich the chance for their proposals by soliciting the influence of members of their Congressional delegation in Washington. Last spring Senator Joseph S. Clark of Pennsylvania addressed representatives of higher education institutions in his state as follows:[3]

"My office stands ready to assist you in every proper way as you seek to find your way through that jungle gym on the Potomac—the federal bureaucracy. But I think it fair to add that the limits of what I deem proper in this regard are quite narrow. Broadly speaking, I feel that my responsibilities have been largely discharged when the Congress concludes its deliberations on an item of legislation.

"My office will be happy to secure information for you. We will be pleased to arrange appointments or meetings for you when this seems desirable. But I do not, and will not, intervene with a federal agency in an effort to influence that agency's decision, as with an application for a grant.

"I think, myself, that the effectiveness of such intervention is vastly over-rated. The procedure by which decisions are made insures that the judgment involved is a professional judgment. To be sure, there are dangers in this because Academe, like the United States Senate, has its Establishment. The danger that the old school tie will be the tie that binds applicants for federal grants to those charged with the responsibility of passing on the application is a real one. Yet this is a professional and not a political problem and in an imperfect world this is an acceptable imperfection. Especially since professional orthodoxy and shared academic values are subject to change through the medium of professional discourse.

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[3] "Remarks of Senator Joseph S. Clark (D, Penna.) at the Pennsylvania Conferences on Federal Grants for Higher Education." May 4, 1965.

"But I can think of no field, save perhaps the administration of justice, in which political influence could have so pernicious an effect as in the field of education. I believe, therefore, that it is in our mutual interest, and indeed in the interest of American society, that we combine to eradicate its influence in this field. This is particularly true in so sensitive an area as financial support stemming from the national government.

"...Your applications, when they are made, should be judged on their merits and should stand or fall in accordance with the best professional judgment and on the basis of their educational worth. At this point my office must restrict its role to wishing you well. That it surely does—but please do not ask more of it."

I am convinced that nearly all members of Congress concur with Senator Clark's sentiments, though not many could express the matter so well. Nevertheless, each year scores of zealous college and university people do write to members of Congress advising that an NDEA institute proposal has been submitted and suggesting directly or by innuendo that some influence would be appreciated.

If anyone is surprised that some of his unsophisticated brethren seek to engage in amateur politics, I hasten to reassure him that these efforts are to no avail. The letters receive routinely courteous treatment in Congressional offices, where normally a clerk staples to them a printed form requesting comments and forwards them to the Office of Education. A courteous letter explaining the established review procedures for institute proposals is sent back to the Congressional office and this response is relayed to the college or university.

In the seven years I spent in the Office of Education I played an administrative role in a variety of competitive grant programs, and never once in these programs was an award made because of the interest, real or imagined, of a member of Congress. This fact represents such a fundamental principle of operation that it simply was not open to discussion.

Of a rather different kind is the communication from the professor or college administrator concerning an institute proposal not selected for support. The disappointment is understandable. But it does seem unwisely precipitate immediately to cry "foul" to one or more members of Congress, accusing the Office of Education of discrimination—as the circumstances may fit—against small colleges or large universities, private or state institutions, the Rocky Mountains or New England, or traditionalism or progress. Such tactics result merely in another courteous, routine exchange of communications. But I believe they also leave a residue of bad feelings between the Office and the professor because they have had to communicate through a third party. And I suspect that in many cases the Congressman's esteem for the two principal parties is regrettably lowered.

I should like to suggest what appears to be a simple and reasonable code for registering complaints:

1. Address complaints and criticisms to the Commissioner of Education. He is eager to insure that programs are conducted in a responsible manner, and he should see that a full reply is forthcoming.

2. If the reply seems unsatisfactory, explain the reasons to the Commissioner in another letter.

3. If after this procedure it is felt that the Office is pursuing an unwise or unfair policy, the time has arrived when full particulars may be sent to Congressional representatives. It is surely proper to seek Congressional assistance after all the pros and cons have been assembled and the net result is unsatisfactory.

At all stages of communication I shall welcome copies of correspondence, sent to me at the MLA. It seems vital that at some place in the private sector there should be a repository of dissatisfaction with the Office of

Education. It is quite possible that a pattern of complaints may reflect a basic defect or abuse in Office operations. The lone professor will not realize this, and personnel in the Office may fail to perceive it. But with the cooperation of alert professors of English the MLA will be enabled to perform one of its proper functions as a national spokesman for members of the modern language profession.

Encouraging Good Teaching through Institutes

Donald N. Bigelow

The task force of the United States Office of Education that launched the new institute program under Title XI of the National Defense Education Act is no more. Instead, something new has been added—namely a division concerned with teacher education. Good bureaucrats, though, couldn't call it anything as simple as that. Officially it is known as the Division of Educational Personnel Training, and among the programs for which it is responsible are the NDEA Institutes for Advanced Study.

First, however, I am reminded of one of my last experiences as a student, when I took a course in English with a really great teacher. It was during the last years of World War II, and I was at Amherst College teaching while working for my M.A., preparing to go to Columbia.

George Whicher could not leave campus—it was not a good year to take a sabbatical—and he was understandably fretful at having to teach freshman composition to a group of pre-West Pointers. So he agreed to give me a course in American literature, to help occupy himself and to let me get more credit toward my M.A. We began with Michael Wigglesworth and Perry Miller—I get them confused—and went on up to Hemingway and Willa Cather. On the second evening session my first paper was returned, and clearly written on it were the words "absolutely incomprehensible." In addition, Professor Whicher had marked 117 errors in grammar. Altogether, it wasn't a very promising beginning, and I felt the blow. So each week I worked harder and harder, as we progressed from Puritanism to Transcendentalism. I wasn't doing very well, but with the assignment to write on the symbolism in *Moby Dick* and *The Scarlet Letter* I felt that my day had finally come. I spent one whole week writing about symbolism in ways that had never seen the light of day. At the drop of a hat, I would read the paper to anyone who came into my room, so that I would know I could read it well on Thursday night. When Professor Whicher said, "Don, read your paper for me," I was going to read one of the greatest essays on symbolism and *Moby Dick* that had ever been written.

The evening finally arrived. He sat on one side of the couch, and I on the other. That's how we always began those wonderful evenings together. Then he said, "Read what you've written," and I read this tremendous paper. And since I knew it was excellent, I read it as if it were. He listened intently, as always, and when I finished he said, "You know, it is a fine paper. It reminds me of a Mississippi steamboat going up the river full blast with its propeller out of water!"

And at the conclusion of the course he said, "You'll never be able to write, Don. Just forget it."

Now I'm not at all sure that there aren't too many teachers who have been saying that too long, however right he may have been. I would assume that part of the effort of the NDEA Title XI program this summer has to do with the notion that more people should write better. And that, I think, is a good way for me to introduce my remarks on NDEA institutes, which the Office of Education hopes will help teachers of English learn more about English and help the teachers who do the teaching to learn more, too.

Perhaps it would be helpful to define an institute—what it is and how its program differs from that provided in the more orthodox undergraduate and graduate curriculums. One thing it definitely is not. It isn't just an assemblage of conventional undergraduate and graduate courses offered to a group of participants who happen to be elementary and secondary school teachers.

Before I go further, perhaps I should touch on the history of the institute concept at the federal level. The National Science Foundation and its institutes in science and mathematics are, of course, well known. Because of the country's increasing international involvement in education after sputnik, next in order came the NDEA of 1958. At that time the Office of Education was given funds to hold institutes in modern foreign languages and in counseling and guidance. Certainly, these were good programs. Missing, however, were many of the subject areas so long the bedrock of a liberal arts education. It was not until 1964 that the balance was restored, when Congress enacted Title XI of the NDEA, which specifically replaced Title VI-B under which the language institute program had been conducted. The Commissioner of Education was now authorized to conduct institutes in a total of nine different areas—in modern foreign languages, English as a second language, English, reading, history, and geography, and for school librarians, educational media specialists, and teachers of disadvantaged youth.[1] And, a matter of some importance, nearly $30 million was allotted to do it with. Most of this happened almost overnight—a farewell salute from the Eighty-eighth Congress before it went home for Thanksgiving and Christmas.

Well do I remember when I heard that the new program had been given to Kenneth Mildenberger—he was with the Office of Education then and I had worked under him since 1961. After many long days and nights in Washington, I had only just joined my family out near the end of Long Island for a three-day vacation. Because I had so little time and because I was tired, I had even hired a little airplane to take me there from Princeton so I wouldn't spend half a day passing through New York City. I thought it was worth the $45 until that night when I was told on the telephone by Mr. Mildenberger that he was to administer Title XI and he asked what I was doing on Long Island. And so the next morning at 9 o'clock I was back in Washington. I assumed I was going back to help him with the new program in history because it seemed logical he would want an historian to help develop the history institutes. Well, to my surprise and consternation, I did get history—and the eight other areas as well! Thus did I become the acting director of the Division of Educational Personnel Training,[2] administering one of the most exciting programs in American education.

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[1] Less than three months after Mr. Bigelow's address, Title XI was again amended to add economics, civics, and industrial arts.

[2] Mr. Bigelow was appointed director of the division on August 28, 1966.

The work of that winter couldn't have been done without the help of the innumerable consultants who came to Washington from so many campuses to help plan the program and to make it a reality. The willingness of the American teacher to stop what he is doing to help the Office of Education is an important and largely unwritten chapter in the history of American education.

In a matter of months 1,000 proposals had been received from institutions of higher education, and contracts had been awarded for 494 institutes that would be conducted at 272 colleges and universities. In the following spring those institutes had received inquiries from nearly half a million elementary and secondary school teachers and had received 150,000 applications from which were selected precisely 20,368 participants.

Now, during the summer of 1965, those 20,000 school teachers are on campuses taking part in a massive dialogue with 3,000 college professors. Even though it's too early to assess the institutes, the Office believes that the qualifications of those teachers will be improved—some more, some less. But certainly all will have learned more about their subjects, and they will also have learned something about the new materials now available, to which too many have been oblivious. Obviously, a dialogue is a two-way proposition, and I think that the teachers of these teachers will benefit too and that because of this expanded institute program continuing improvements in the regular curriculum can be expected at the institutions that help to prepare school teachers. This could mean that some day so many institutes won't be needed, because those new teachers coming out of the pipeline will be getting the education they should have and won't need to attend institutes to learn what they weren't taught earlier.

And that, of course, leads me back to the institute concept and just what kind of animal it is. To start with, an institute is marked by a special tone of its own. There's a sense of being involved in something different and peculiarly important. People who attend institutes are excited by them and loyal to them, with an intensity unfamiliar in college classrooms. They enjoy one another's company, and they share common concerns for five or six weeks or more. Even the instructors tend to respond to this excitement, this community of concerns and purposes.

This special intensity that so often characterizes NDEA institutes is derived from several sources. Perhaps, most of all, it comes from the components that make up the coursework, which have been planned with a view of integrating each with the other and are designed to direct the participants toward a definite, limited objective.

Instructors and participants are carefully selected, and though it is not always so, usually a high degree of homogeneity prevails. Both the college instructor and the school teacher come to the institute in the belief that there is something missing in the way the teachers have been educated and something missing in the way they are teaching others. The elementary or secondary school teacher wants to learn how to change his methods of teaching whether by adding to his substantive knowledge or by improving his skills in communicating this knowledge to his pupils. The college instructor is interested in helping him to achieve that objective. Since all the participants are teachers, the ultimate success of the institute will not be demonstrated on the campus where it is conducted but in the classrooms throughout the land to which the teachers return.

And so, an institute is different from conventional graduate study because usually there is a different relationship between instructor and student and because all parts of an institute fit together tightly. Furthermore, an institute concentrates on a few topics and encourages people who want to change the way a subject or a special group of students is taught to focus on a specific goal.

For a moment I'd like to talk about institutes in English. There are 105 of them, and they have about 4,500 participants. In general, all institutes have two major objectives: to give elementary and secondary school teachers instruction in new knowledge of their subject and to help improve their qualifications *as teachers.* It is this concentration on English not just as a subject to be studied but as one to be shared, one that both the instructors and students are engaged in teaching, that inevitably gives the institute its most distinguishing characteristic, one far different from that found in most of the graduate schools from which they have come.

I've said little about the other Title XI program areas, but in passing I should at least make reference to those institutes for teachers of the disadvantaged. I remember that when Mr. Mildenberger told me I would have all of Title XI, including institutes for the disadvantaged, I told him, "You don't want me for this. I'm no social worker and I think the do-gooders have done more to destroy the course of civilization than any group I know. Besides, I don't even know what the term 'disadvantaged' means." He replied, "Well, it doesn't matter. You'll learn." He was right, although I still don't know what's to be done about the disadvantaged—but I think I am learning.

Certainly I've learned that anybody concerned with strengthening the qualifications of elementary and secondary school teachers must take into consideration the problems of urban life today, especially of what is referred to as the inner city. But instructors don't just train teachers of the disadvantaged. They train *teachers,* not simply teachers for a certain kind of student. As the problems of English institutes are considered, it becomes apparent that there is more involved than Chaucer or Shakespeare or composition or rhetoric. I'm not sure of the statistics, but I suspect that as many as 20 percent of this summer's institutes in English are more concerned with teachers of the disadvantaged than with something that used to be called English. And I would hope that the remaining balance are also concerned with good teaching, since good teaching is what is really meant when the training of teachers of the disadvantaged is discussed.

To get to the heart of what I'm really trying to say, the NDEA seeks to encourage good teaching through the somewhat ill-assorted group of programs included within Title XI. The common denominator is not English or the humanities or library science or history, but the problem of teacher training. Quite simply, I'm suggesting that by talking about the subject matter of English, an institute director is talking about the art of teaching.

Research Programs of the U.S. Office of Education

Francis Ianni

When President Kennedy called education the keystone in the arch, he was anticipating the present attitude in American society toward the process of education. Looking at just the last 10 years in the development of educational programs in this country, some rather interesting and, I think, important implications emerge. I'd like to discuss particularly the emerging role of research in education.

For many years education was a matter left almost entirely to the schools. It was a self-contained system in which any change had to come about from within that system. Often the lag between the development of new ideas and their actual implementation was so great that many schools could be characterized as the most slow-moving segment of society.

For example, the simple, well-researched idea that kindergarten was an important experience for children took 70 years between the development of the concept through research and its actual implementation to the extent that 50 percent of the school systems in the United States were making active use of kindergarten. It is estimated that generally in education about 40 years elapse between the process of research and development and its implementation in the schools. In the U.S. Office of Education it is assumed that only 35 of these years are the fault of the Office and that causes for the other 5 must be sought elsewhere.

Basically the lag between research and implementation in the past stemmed from the failure to recognize educational research as the entire process of the development of new practices in education, the development of new materials for widespread use, and, perhaps most important, the development of new techniques for preparing teachers and administrators for new responsibilities in the schools. Unlike research in medicine, agriculture, or defense, educational research has not involved itself in any systematic way in these processes of implementation.

So often in educational research, the researcher has been isolated from the practitioner, the individual who is actually doing the teaching. Why has this situation existed? I think one reason is that in the past educational research has tended to focus on small, highly specific, and relatively unimportant problems in education. There seem to be two primary reasons for this. One is that the best people simply have not been attracted to educational research—and this fact can be shown by a series of different measures. But I think a much more important reason is that the educator who becomes involved in the process of research is usually so scorned by his colleagues in the physical sciences and the social sciences that he has to attempt to pull the mantle of science over himself, taking a small manageable problem with which he can use exquisite statistical techniques. Thus he is often prevented from facing important major problems.

The past situation provides the background for my main point, which is that the Office of Education in the last two years has taken a different view as to what the research process should be and how it should take place. I would like to give several illustrations.

As I mentioned earlier, one reason educational research has not tackled major questions is that teachers, who have experience in the process of education, and scholars, who have considerable knowledge about the content of what takes place in education, normally have not been part of the planning process in developing a research program. What tends to happen, then, is that the researcher himself picks some problem to study.

The first step in the research process is what is called research development. It is a process in which important problems in education are isolated and suggested solutions are tested through research. There are now programs in the Office of Education for supporting this type of research planning. For example the Office has supported approximately five or six developmental projects in the field of English. How successful they have been is for someone else to say, but I want to point out that this process has at least provided the means for bringing together teachers, scholars, and researchers to plan what a research program should be like.

I cannot pretend that the relationship has always been a happy one. The Office has found, for example, that in some conferences, the lines of communication among these groups are so strained that the first two days are spent largely identifying to which camp everyone belongs, the third day is spent solidifying the barriers around that camp, and the only time any real mixing takes place seems to be in the corridors and sometimes in the bar.

An example from a project actually carried out in a school might be illuminating. The Office recently supported the development of new English materials. During the summer the teachers from the school and English professors from a university met to develop new curriculum materials. These materials were then tested for one year in actual practice in the local school systems. As part of this program, the professors of English from the university taught one course each, using these new materials, in the local schools. One of the professors was telling me recently that just as she was about to leave the school after one year of experimentation she met with its principal, who said to her, "This has been a very successful program. It's worked quite well. We never even knew that you were here." Now the fact that an administrator defines a successful research program as one that does not disturb the school is, I think, some indication of the problems educational research faces.

In this initial process, then, the significant problems have to be identified, and they can only be identified by bringing together a variety of individuals representing a range of experience.

The second stage in this total process is perhaps the most difficult one at the moment. In the past it has been called basic research. But the term has just been changed; a word has been borrowed from the Italians—always good people to borrow a word from—and it is now called fundamental research, because the idea of basic research usually conjures up the picture of someone in a white laboratory coat looking through a microscope. The important question here is what is fundamental research, or basic research, in education.

One example of fundamental research that the Division of Educational Research in the Office recently supported is the reediting of Mark Twain. This was not undertaken without a certain amount of criticism by some colleagues in the Office of Education and by some members of the Congress. One Congressman, for example, wanted to know whether the division was going to support the development of those dirty books that Mr. Twain wrote also. Another wanted to know where anyone got the stupid idea somebody else could write Mark Twain better than Mark Twain wrote Mark Twain.

Now what the support of this project means is that the division has taken a position, sometimes difficult to defend, that there really is no such thing as basic educational research, but rather that education draws its research findings from a series of disciplines—and that what is found in sociology, in psychology, in anthropology, and, yes, even in English literature, becomes the basis for development in education. Whereas in the past the focus has been primarily on the findings of educational psychologists, today's education is changing so rapidly that it has to be abreast of changes which come about in all of the disciplines. In the process of fundamental research, the Office of Education is now willing to support research that in many cases would have been turned down in the past. This willingness seems to me to be a major change in its policy.

As long as I'm in the business of confessing, I'll make one other confession. Most of us who are involved in the research programs of the Office of Education are former researchers, and consequently we spend most of our time worrying about new and good research. We labored for many years with the false idea that all we had to do was to develop excellent new materials, come out with some good research findings on how to use these materials, have them available in Washington, and then just sit back while there was a mad rush of people coming to Washington to get these techniques and materials and put them into use. What we have found of course is that nobody rushed to Washington and that many of the results of research, much of what we found through educational research, tended to sit on shelves gathering dust.

Consequently two years ago we moved to a new type of program. It's one again that has not been without difficulties, but I think it might be characterized, using the analogy from the physical sciences, as the engineering and development phase of the research process. Once the findings of research have become available, the next step is to put them into some form that can actually be used in the schools.

The Office of Education faced an interesting problem after it, along with the National Science Foundation, spent about $11 million on the development of new mathematics programs, which are generically called the "new math." In the process of developing these materials so much reliance was placed on the materials themselves that the teacher was forgotten. No one ever bothered to think about how teachers would use these materials, particularly when they were not trained in the "new math."

I must confess that wisdom came to me, as it often does, from the mouths of my children. My oldest son had the fortune or misfortune of taking one of these math courses in school. He came home one day and said, "Father, I know what is wrong with that math course that you and the National Science Foundation put all the money in. I understand it and the other kids understand it, but the teacher doesn't really understand it."

Thus one of the greatest problems in the whole process of research and development is that very little time or interest has been devoted to developing new curricular materials for the preparation of teachers. A great deal of money has been spent developing new curriculums, but there is not one new set of curricular materials for preparing teachers. The process of teacher education or teacher preparation or teacher training goes on *here*

—and new curricular development goes on *there.* What happens often is that teachers, particularly in their preservice experience, do not have exposure to the kinds of materials that are going to be used in the schools when they get into the process of teaching.

Once the process of developing these materials has taken place the next step is what is called dissemination—again in government jargon. Obviously even after the materials have been developed it's necessary to disseminate them to the individuals who are going to use them. How is this done? One obvious possibility is through an institute program; another possibility is through improving in-service training. But a question needs to be asked: What happens when the teacher goes back from one of these programs to the school?

Penologists know for example that if criminals are put in an institution for five years, a great deal of time and effort is spent changing their behavior and attitudes, and then they are returned to exactly the same environment they came from, the rate of recidivism, or the rate of returning to crime, is somewhere around 90 percent. I am not saying that teachers are recidivists. Rather, I do want to point out that educators have concentrated so much on changing teachers' attitudes, knowledge, and behavior that they have forgotten it's the administrator who makes most of the changes in a school system. Any number of teachers can be trained and retrained and reeducated, but if they have to go back to an administrator who is resistant to change and who has no idea of the innovation that is going on throughout the country, he will simply block any attempts to bring about change and development. Thus the process of implementation has to involve administrators in the mainstream of innovation and change. And parents, school board members, and other community leaders who can also resist change in the schools if they wish haven't even been mentioned yet.

A related problem lies in the fact that if administrators do not understand research, the results of educational research can be completely corrupted in an attempt to put them to use.

Since I am an anthropologist, I'll give an example from anthropology of how research results can be completely corrupted. When the doctrine of evolution first became relatively well-accepted, there was one group of scientists or pseudoscientists in the South who quoted Darwin as saying that each of the modern races was descended from a different great ape, a fact which is of course a complete corruption of the Darwinian theory. But nevertheless this group held that Darwin said that the modern Negroid was descended from the gorilla because there are certain anatomical similarities and because they come from the same general place in the world. The modern Mongoloid—Chinese, Japanese, and Korean—was supposed to be descended from the chimpanzee, again for similar reasons. Now that left the Caucasoids, or the white race, without any visible ancestor. But they were supposed to be descended, believe it or not, from the white-faced baboon. This theory continued until about 1922 when Professor Yerkes at Yale did a series of studies on the comparative intelligence of the great apes and found that, "The chimpanzee is the most intelligent of the apes and the gorilla a close second." As a matter of fact there is only one idiot in the entire family, and that's the white-faced baboon. Well, it's easy to imagine how long the theory continued after that revelation—it was quickly demolished. But the same thing can happen in education, and has been happening more and more in recent years as new advances come about in innovation. Again, unless administrators and teachers are an integral part of the process of research their interpretations of what research says can be quite different from what research actually does say.

Finally, once dissemination or diffusion takes place, the educational system immediately generates new questions for research. And when new problems are created, new research development has to take place. What this means is that this country needs a system in education in which constant reappraisal and renewal are encouraged. The process that I've been describing must be a continuous one—identifying problems, researching solutions, implementing them, and identifying new problems.

Research and development programs which combine all the steps I've described to you are now possible under authorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965. This means that the Office of Education can specifically encourage the bringing together of groups of teachers, scholars, administrators, and other individuals involved in the process of education to identify existing problems and attempt to sketch out solutions. The Elementary and Secondary Education Act authorized two additional partners—industry, which has a good deal of sophistication in research, and professional societies, such as the Modern Language Association.

The Office is actively seeking research development programs on the part of scholars in the field of English as well as educational researchers. Applying for these programs is a very simple process. There are no deadline dates. Proposals can come in at any time, and any problems can be discussed with the Office prior to submission of a formal proposal.

The new act also makes it possible to support total programs of research, development, and implementation in a single institution. These institutions will typically involve colleges and universities, local school systems, state departments of education, and other groups interested in education in various communities. Funds will be available for experimental schools, experimental programs of teacher training and development, programs where administrators from local schools can take an active part in the process of development, and even for construction. It is estimated that six of these will be in operation by next June, and after the initial stages they will be financed at between $3 and $6 million per year for each one of the laboratories. The program has not been officially announced yet, but the Office of Education has received 30 preliminary applications from various parts of the country, so it would seem that the program is off to a good start.

In closing I want to repeat that the process of education today is undergoing such rapid change that educators simply can't leave it to a by-guess and by-gosh system. Planning for change must come from adequate educational research, and this can only take place if the best people in the universities, the schools, and even in industry are involved in the process of developing new techniques, new methods, and new materials in the field of education.

One of the important changes that has come about as the result of Title IV of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act is that the Office now has funds for training educational researchers. It will be training not only educational psychologists, but curriculum developers and implementers in a variety of fields, and educational innovators in general. An undergraduate research participation program, in which undergraduates can become involved in the process of research, will also begin in September. The important point is that research should not and must not be left to researchers alone—all individuals involved in the process of education must be part of educational innovation. Now this is not always a popular idea.

Recently I was back at Yale where I used to teach anthropology, and I was talking to the chairman of the department there. He always takes me to task for being in Washington and usually starts the conversation with, "What is an anthropologist doing in the Office of Education?" And I always give him the same answer—which is that one of our important responsibilities is to study primitive institutions. (I used to say old fossils, but I got into trouble for that.) But seriously, he has pointed out to me year after year that if the Office spends all its time trying to intrigue teachers and administrators into educational research, there is not going to be anybody left to teach or administer. My answer to him, which is my favorite response to this type of question and to the charge that we are in effect converting everyone into a researcher, lies in an anecdote.

When I was at the University of Rome I heard a story about another famous converter, Bishop Fulton J. Sheen, who is quite famous for converting people to Catholicism. The story is that when he went to Rome he had, naturally, a private audience with the Pope. The stated period for the audience was 15 minutes. After 15 minutes Bishop Sheen was still in talking with the Pope. After half an hour he still hadn't come out, and after 45 minutes the monsignori, the attendants on the outside, became somewhat disturbed. One of them looked inside and saw a rather strange sight. Bishop Sheen, the great converter to Catholicism, was sitting in a chair very calmly, very tranquilly, with his hands folded looking at the ceiling. But the Pope was pacing back and forth with perspiration dripping from his brow, saying over and over, "But, Bishop Sheen, I'm already a Catholic, I'm already a Catholic."

This shows my attitude about involving teachers and administrators in research. I feel that they are already part of the process. They're already Catholic—in effect all I ask is that we go to Mass together.

Teaching the Culturally Disadvantaged

Daniel C. Thompson

It is a well-known fact that sociocultural differences may seriously interfere with communication between individuals and groups. The spoken and written word may have quite different intellectual and emotional connotations for persons who represent significantly different sociocultural backgrounds. Consequently, persons engaged in a dialogue will hear, observe, define, and interpret the contents of the situation in terms of their previous cultural background and experiences.

The sociocultural dimension of communication, as applied to education, was recognized by Allison Davis almost two decades ago. Davis insists that many teaching talents and efforts are wasted because on the one hand teachers are usually recruited from the middle class and have been socialized according to middle class norms and values. On the other hand, lower class students are socialized according to lower class values and norms. Teachers would be expected to use materials, present ideas and attitudes, expound values, advocate goals, and adopt speech habits that reflect middle class culture. The lower class students are likely to be baffled, overwhelmed, and even defeated because their intellectual, cultural, and emotional experiences have not prepared them for the adjustment, comprehension, and interpretation expected of them in the middle class academic setting.

Lower class students in a middle-class-oriented school are called upon to perform two very difficult, yet essential, tasks: One, they must keep up with middle class students who are much more familiar with the background and contents of subjects they are expected to master. And two (the point of primary concern here), they must, in a sense, often do this with the uncertain and relatively ineffective help of their teachers. This is so because all too frequently teachers do not know how to communicate with lower class students. The students are even more frustrated than the teachers and tend to develop a feeling of intellectual isolation from their teachers and classmates alike because much of the time they do, in fact, speak what amounts to a different, even "foreign," language.

The key problem is this: Students who need the help and understanding of the teacher most are precisely those with whom the teacher is least capable of communicating. This problem is becoming increasingly widespread and serious because the civil rights movement is motivating more and more Negroes to seek the highest quality of education this nation offers. Their aspiration to enter the best schools and colleges is backed up by well-organized demands on the part of civil rights groups, a sympathetic public opinion, and all branches of the federal government.

Since Negroes in larger and larger numbers will be seeking an education in all of our colleges and since it is legally and morally right—as well as wise national policy—to provide the best education possible for all American citizens, it may be instructive to examine some aspects of the sociocultural background, experiences, and aspirations of Negroes as a means of finding some feasible solution to the difficult problem of intercultural communication.

A classic and most fruitful definition of culture was given by E. B. Tylor almost 100 years ago. According to him, "Culture... is that complex whole which includes knowledge, belief, art, morals, law, customs, and any other capabilities and habits acquired by man as a member of society."[1]

The key idea in Tylor's definition is that culture is *acquired* or *learned* in association with other people. It follows, then, that the specific contents of the culture acquired by members of a particular group will be determined very largely by the level of knowledge, and so forth, of those with whom they have sustained and meaningful communication.

The notion that culture is *learned* behavior is absolutely essential to any definitive interpretation of the sociocultural dimension of communication between middle-class-oriented teachers and students who are recruited from among the underprivileged, culturally disadvantaged masses. Accordingly, this all-important fact needs to be kept in mind: The raison d'être of the biracial system in the United States is precisely that of preventing Negroes from participating fully in the larger society. Consequently, the unusual social restrictions placed upon Negroes are uniquely and expressly designed to limit the extent and quality of communication Negroes may have with non-Negro Americans. These restrictions, in turn, function to place severe limits upon their opportunities to *acquire* or *learn* certain dimensions of the way of life characteristic of white Americans who freely participate in the dominant culture.

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[1] *Primitive Society.* London: John Murry, 1871, p. 1.

As is well-known the vast majority of Negroes have been traditionally, and often legally, confined to segregated ghettoes. Practically all of their sustained contacts and communication have been with fellow denizens. And unlike "the impecunious immigrant" or "even the vice-lord or gangster, [who,] after he makes his pile, may lose himself in a respectable neighborhood,...Negroes, regardless of their affluence, wear the badge of color." The neighborhood in which they live tends to become a "permanent enclave."[2] Thus, permanent all-Negro neighborhoods and very limited interneighborhood contacts with white Americans have been the fountainhead of many important cultural traits among Negroes that are markedly different from comparable traits characteristic of the white sector of the biracial system.

Regardless of the number of more or less unique cultural traits that might be found among Negroes, it would be misleading to refer to an alleged "Negro culture" as a separate, distinct, or "foreign" aspect of American culture. Insightful examination has often revealed that what at first blush might appear to be a distinctly Negro cultural trait usually turns out to be some degree of reinterpretation or revision of a universal American cultural trait. This is not uncommon because the unique social circumstances and pressures inherent in the depressed and disesteemed status of lower class Negroes have made it necessary to continually make appropriate, commensurate cultural innovations in order to facilitate their adjustment in the biracial system.

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[2] St. Clair Drake and Horace R. Cayton, *Black Metropolis.* New York: Harper Torchbooks, 1961. See Chapter Eight, especially p. 206.

The main principle that must be relied upon to explain the contents of the so-called Negro culture is the same as that underlying the many subcultures in American society—namely, social isolation. That is, the particular cultural pattern of any minority group in a society will vary from that of the dominant group in proportion to the degree that social isolation or a communication barrier exists. According to this approach there is no more a distinct Negro culture than there is a distinct New England, Mid-Western, Southern, or Appalachian culture. All represent innovations on basic or universal traits in American culture. Some innovations begin by accident while others are expedient adaptations. They become elaborated in different directions and are given varying degrees of emphasis, depending largely upon the nature and extent of isolation experienced by the minority group in question. Essentially, however, the particular pattern of culture continues to be bona fide versions of traits and themes characteristic of the dominant culture. Fundamentally, norms tend to remain constant, despite more or less necessary innovations and reinterpretations by disadvantaged groups.

In a sense all subcultures in American society may be best understood as variations on the same cultural continuum or arc. Since no individual or group can possibly learn and participate in the total culture, each tends to select those items that have the greater functional value for solving its own particular life problems. Those traits deemed most useful are adopted and elaborated, and those that have little functional value or actually appear to be dysfunctional are likely to be picked over or rejected outright. Thus Negroes, like other Americans, have adopted and developed those traits that seem best suited to their own peculiar circumstances.

The Negroes' tendency toward selective acquisition and elaboration is best reflected in their institutional ways. For example, the Negro church articulates the same basic beliefs as do white Protestant churches, but historically, it has played a much more diversified role in the social life of Negroes than has the white church in the total life of Americans at large. Conversely, since white segregationists have always resisted the Negro's attempts to participate in the political life of this nation and since, unlike other institutions, politics cannot be effectively segregated, the masses of Negroes have not learned political ways. One prominent Negro leader avers that even the typical Negro leader is still "politically naïve." Again, as will be seen later, the Negro family's structure and function vary from the white model in proportion to the degree of isolation a given segment of the Negro population experiences from the white-dominated American society in which it is found.

In some instances, then, certain social segments of the Negro population characteristically participate in cultural patterns that are quite different from those in the dominant culture. On the negative extreme of the cultural continuum their deviation is manifested in high rates of antisocial and socially reprehensible behavior. On the positive extreme others participate in cultural patterns that exemplify strong puritan-like morality. Some such Negro individuals and families have been described as "super-Americans,"[3] or as "quintessential Americans."[4]

Gunnar Myrdal summarizes expert views on "Negro culture" in this way:

"In his allegiances the Negro is characteristically an American. He believes in the American Creed and in other ideals held by most Americans,

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[3] A Former Faculty Wife, "A Note on Intergroup Conditioning and Conflict Among an Interracial Faculty at a Negro College," *Social Forces* Vol. 27, No. 4, May 1949, pp. 430-433.

[4] Horace Mann Bond, "Should the Negro Care Who Wins the War," *The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science,* September 1942, p. 84.

. . . He imitates the dominant culture as he sees it and in so far as he can adopt it under his conditions of life. For the most part he is not proud of those things in which he differs from the white American. . . . In practically all its divergencies, American Negro culture is not something independent of general American culture. It is a distorted development, or a pathological condition, of the general American culture."[5]

The main purpose of this paper is to suggest some causes for certain distorted or pathological traits characteristic of the subculture of American Negroes, and to show how they are likely to function as barriers to effective communication.

Several reputable studies of socially induced personality disorders concur that when individuals are subjected to unusual, severe wish frustrations for a considerable period of time they begin to develop distorted and pathological personality traits.[6] In keeping with this line of thinking it may be rewarding to examine some of the major social pressures experienced by Negro Americans and see to what extent their responses to unusual frustrations have given rise to certain cultural distortions and pathologies that tend to function as barriers to their effective communication with middle-class-oriented teachers.

Perhaps the most promising approach to an understanding of the fundamental causes for certain significant differences between norms or standards in lower-class Negro culture and middle-class American culture is to identify some cardinal values in American middle-class culture and illustrate how difficult it is for lower-class Negroes to internalize and participate in these values. Four key values that constitute the core or ethos of American middle-class culture—freedom, security, equality of opportunity, and human dignity—will be examined.

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[5] *An American Dilemma.* New York: Harper & Bros., 1944, p. 928.

[6] See John Dollard *et al., Frustration and Aggression,* New Haven: Yale University Press, 1939, 209 pp.; Allison Davis and John Dollard, *Children of Bondage,* Washington, D.C.: American Council on Education, 1940, 299 pp.; Odd Nansen, *From Day to Day,* New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1949, pp. 437-440; Bruno Bettelheim, "Individual and Mass Behavior in Extreme Situations," *Journal of Abnormal and Social Psychology* Vol. 38, 1943, p. 417; J. H. Rohrer and M. S. Edmonson (eds.), *The Eighth Generation,* New York: Harper and Brothers, 1960, 346 pp.; E. Franklin Frazier, *Black Bourgeoisie,* New York: Collier Books, 1962, 222 pp.; and Thomas F. Pettigrew, *A Profile of the Negro American,* Princeton, N. J.: D. Van Nostrand Company, Inc., 1964, 250 pp., especially Chapter Eight.

Freedom. The most cherished value in American culture is freedom. Actually, in one way or another all other values in the culture presuppose freedom of the individual.[7] Thus, insight into lower-class Negro culture is impossible without some knowledge of how Negroes have been systematically denied the freedom guaranteed all other Americans.

Certainly no other racial group has had freedom withheld from it for so long and so completely as has the Negro. Soon after its founding each American colony began systematically to force Negroes into slavery. Virginia made this practice legal in 1661. After this time the number of slaves increased rapidly. Negro resentment mounted, and masters lived in fear of slave uprisings.

"The colonial assembly therefore adopted a rigid-slave code, restricting the freedom of movement of the slaves, inflicting severe penalties for even minor offenses and denying slaves civil and criminal rights."[8]

This succinct summary of the status of slaves indicates the extent to which Negroes were denied all of the elementary freedoms, of "life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness," the "founding fathers" adopted as a guideline for the establishment of any legitimate government. Furthermore, as severe as were the legal restrictions imposed upon slaves, they were mild when compared with the extralegal sanctions allowed slave masters. Negroes were completely at the whim of their masters and enjoyed no degree of freedom their masters elected to deny them.[9]

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[7] See Daniel C. Thompson, "The Rise of the Negro Protest," *The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* Vol. 357, January 1965, pp. 18-29.

[8] Rayford W. Logan, *The Negro in the United States.* New York: D. Van Nostrand Company, Inc., 1957, p. 9.

The final blow to whatever limited degree of freedom might have been allowed slaves under the several versions of "Black Codes," and the extra-legal prerogatives accorded individual slave masters, was destroyed by the 1857 Dred Scott decision. It was then that the U.S. Supreme Court ruled that a Negro born to a slave was not an American citizen and, in effect, had no rights that his master needed to respect.[10]

Without doubt the system of slavery was designed, in every particular, to curtail and in some instances to completely withhold from Negroes the freedom guaranteed other Americans.

Immediately after the collapse of the Confederacy the South set about the creation of a system of racial segregation and discrimination as a substitute for the outlawed slave system.[11] At first this system was informal and contrary to the spirit of Reconstruction. Nevertheless, bitterness on the part of the defeated South, almost complete economic destitution, the awkwardness of Negroes as citizens, the ideological confusion of Northern liberals and "carpetbaggers," and the ready willingness of the federal government to compromise on the citizenship status of Negroes for the sake of national unity, proved to be a potent combination of ingredients that fertilized the soil for the speedy growth of a durable biracial system. The avowed main purpose of this system was to keep Negroes completely powerless in local and national affairs. Thus the avowed desire to prevent Negroes from exercising inherent citizenship privileges became the basis of the "solid South." Speaking of the prevalent fear that Negroes might become the balance of power in the South, Henry W. Grady said, "This fear has kept and will keep, the whites solid! It would keep the intelligence and responsibility of any community, North or South, solid.... the supremacy of the white race of the South must be maintained forever."[12]

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[9] *Ibid.*, p. 20.

[10] The Fourteenth Amendment "recalled" this implication in the Dred Scott decision and clearly defined citizenship in terms of birth in the United States.

[11] For a brief but comprehensive discussion of Jim Crow laws see C. Vann Woodward, *The Strange Career of Jim Crow*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1961, 183 pp.

Actually when Grady issued his formal call for a solid South the status gains made by Negroes immediately following the Civil War had been virtually erased. For all practical purposes Southern whites were already solidly allied against the freedom of Negroes. Severe informal restrictions placed upon Negroes were already being sanctioned by state legislatures, North and South—laws were passed restricting the freedom of Negroes in all phases of racial contacts from place of residence to marriage.

Jim Crow laws passed by state legislatures were vigorously enforced by "lily-white" police and courts. The courts, in effect, became the very effective strong arm of anti-Negro sentiment, notwithstanding the guarantee of full citizenship accorded Negroes by the federal government.[13]

In 1883 the Supreme Court declared the Civil Rights Act of 1875 (guaranteeing Negroes equal rights to the full and equal enjoyment of public accommodations) unconstitutional. This decision tended to give federal sanction to the large body of Jim Crow laws that had already been passed and paved the way for others that followed. And in 1896 the Supreme Court sustained the infamous "separate but equal" doctrine.[14] This decision did "stamp(s) the colored race with a badge of inferiority," as Mr. Justice John Marshall Harlan pointed out in his dissent, and condemned them to second-class citizenship with the avowed approval of the highest court. Thus, all levels of government in the United States countenanced the practice of limiting the freedom of Negroes. Through laws and customs Negroes were confined to the physical, social, and cultural ghettoes assigned them by a hostile white majority.

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[12] *The New South.* New York: Robert Bonner's Sons, 1890, pp. 239-243. See also Thomas N. Page, *The Negro: The Southerner's Problem.* New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1904, pp. 104-108.

[13] Myrdal, *op. cit.*, pp. 550-555.

[14] *Plessy v. Ferguson,* 163 U. S. 537.

For more than 50 years the Supreme Court repeatedly refused to grant Negroes freedom to participate in the wider society as equal citizens. Finally in 1954 the court reversed itself and declared the 1896 decision null and void.[15] Since then each President of the United States and Congress have joined federal courts in support of the Negro's right to enjoy the same freedoms as other citizens. Yet, despite all efforts on the part of the federal government (and some state governments outside the South), the vast majority of Negroes in 1965 are still confined to Negro ghettoes (in the broadest connotation) with little or no opportunity to enjoy the degree of freedom accorded and guaranteed white citizens. Thus, the lack of adequate freedom is the ultimate source of the distortions in "Negro culture," and a most important reason why it differs in some significant ways from middle-class American culture.

Security. A second basic human value is security. Here again, in order to understand the essential nature of "Negro culture" it is necessary to take into account the fact that no other group in American society has been subjected to the great degree and variety of insecurities as has the Negro.

As mentioned earlier, Negroes were regarded as chattel during the slave period. Insofar as the law was concerned they had no more security of person than a domestic animal. There was no legal or recognized extralegal machinery according to which they could receive redress of wrongs committed against them.

The Emancipation Proclamation and the Reconstruction Amendments (the Thirteenth, Fourteenth, and Fifteenth) were intended to provide full citizenship status for Negroes and to guarantee them equal protection of

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[15] *Brown, etc., v. Board of Education of Topeka,* 347, U.S. 483 (1954).

the law. The extent to which Negroes have actually received protection of the law varies, of course, from one section of the nation to another and from one community to another. Yet, even now, there is hardly any place in the United States where Negroes can expect the same degree of personal security as guaranteed their white neighbors. For the most part, even in communities where Negroes constitute a large segment of the population, local governments, including the total legal machinery, are controlled by white officials who often evince definite anti-Negro sentiments. The fact is, there are today only a few communities, North or South, where Negroes do not complain about police brutality and unequal justice.

As frustrating as have been the uncertain racial practices of constituted legal authority, they have not been nearly as frustrating as the prevalence of organized violence and the threat of mob behavior. The situation Myrdal described in the 1940s persists in some sections of the South today. He said, "It is the custom in the South to permit whites to resort to violence against the life, personal security, property and freedom of movement of Negroes. There is a wide variety of behavior, ranging from a mild admonition to murder, which the white man may exercise to control Negroes."[16]

The truth of this statement is underscored by events in the South today and by the fact that since the Civil War there have been of record 5,000 or more lynchings. There was an average of 150 a year from 1882 to 1901. In one year, 1892, there was a high of 231![17] Many of these reflected extreme sadism.

Although lynching has been diminishing during the last 20 years or so, it is still resorted to in certain southern communities when Negro protest begins to threaten the biracial status quo. Consequently, there has been a revival of the Ku Klux Klan in some sections of the Deep South where

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[16] Myrdal, *op. cit.*, p. 558.

[17] Ralph Ginzberg, *100 Years of Lynchings.* New York: Lancer Books, 1962, p. 244.

Negroes are beginning to demand civil rights. In these same communities lynchings and violence against Negroes are increasing.

Finally, it should be noted in this connection that no white person in the South has ever been executed for the murder of a Negro. As a general practice no one is even arrested for participating in mob violence against Negroes. In rare instances when arrests are made and guilt established, white culprits are either set free or given relatively light fines or sentences.

In addition to the constant threat of violence, Negroes continue to experience citizenship insecurity attendant to their being a virtually powerless minority. As it stands now only a small number of Negroes are in any political decision-making positions anywhere in the United States, and they have been more or less completely disfranchised in many communities in the Deep South.[18] Therefore, when any governmental decision is being made that might somehow affect the welfare of Negroes there is naturally great uneasiness on their part because they are most vulnerable.

The Negro's feeling of insecurity is well-founded. For instance, since the 1954 Supreme Court decision outlawing segregation in public education, southern state legislatures have passed scores of "Black Codes" and some have voted interposition in order that they might preserve the existing biracial system. And though the federal government is slowing down anti-Negro legislation on the part of southern states, the anti-Negro issue is still the most effective means of getting votes in many sections of the Deep South.

There are those who believe that the most debilitating insecurity experienced by Negroes is economic. It is true, of course, that the economic status of Negroes today is a great deal higher than in 1865, when it was near zero, and it has continued to improve in recent decades, yet the fact remains that Negroes still lag far behind whites in this regard. Thus, after

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[18] This situation is changing rapidly, because of the positive intervention of the federal government under provisions of the 1964 Civil Rights Act and the 1965 voter bill.

20 years of general prosperity, their average income is just a little more than half (54 percent) that of white persons. Their unemployment rate is still about twice as high as the national average.[19]

Equality of opportunity. A third general value that is at the fountainhead or core of middle-class culture is the right of every citizen to enjoy equality of opportunity. Negroes, like other American citizens, have been indoctrinated in the rightness, even the sacredness, of this value. Yet, there is no area of American life in which Negroes are actually accorded equality of opportunity. This relative deprivation of opportunity continues to be a major source of personal and group frustrations among Negroes and a main reason for certain cultural distortions. To some extent all Negroes seem to feel that their status—be it class, professional, or simply economic—is considerably lower than it would be if they were white. One frequently hears this kind of statement or implication among all socioeconomic classes of Negroes: "All things being equal... if I were white I would have ... gotten a particular job... been elected to some public position... been awarded some honor... or had more money."

It must be kept in mind that the fundamental raison d'être of the biracial system in the United States is precisely that of denying Negroes equality of opportunity. Thus, while some few Negroes have undoubtedly gained higher social status in the Negro ghetto than they could have possibly achieved in the community or nation at large, where competitors are more numerous and competition keener, the fact remains that in about every major area of American society there is still some ceiling on the estimable aspirations of Negroes.

No one knows, or perhaps could ever know, exactly what proportion of Negroes are underemployed, the extent to which talents and abilities of Negroes have been allowed to remain fallow or unused, and the degree to which the biracial system has discouraged ambition. Yet, every reliable study of this problem concurs that in practically every area of American society too much of the vast potential among Negroes is allowed to go unrecognized and, of course, unused.[20]

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[19] For a summary of the relative economic status of Negroes see *The Journal of Negro Education* Vol. XXXII, No. 4, Section 3, pp. 349-401.

Therefore, speaking of the Negro professional, Myrdal writes:

"In the existing American civilization he can grow to a degree of distinction, but always as a representative of 'his people,' not as an ordinary American or an individual in humanity....

"Even if ordinarily he should have the interests and the aptitudes for wider knowledge and a broader career, the pressure of this expectancy on the part of the society conditions his personality and forces him, willy-nilly, into the role of a Negro. . . ."[21]

Myrdal concludes that the "souls" of Negroes are "pressed into one single narrow furrow of human interests by the tyrannic expectancy of society, . . ."

Since the biracial system, by its very nature, functions to limit opportunities of Negroes to achieve success, Negroes lack a sufficient variety of "heroes," so to speak, with whom they might identify, as Negroes. This fact is an important reason for the widespread lethargy and relatively low academic aspiration among Negro youth. Some of them reason that success, as conceived in middle-class terms, would be too difficult for them to achieve. For others the problem is far more subtle and difficult to verbalize. It is essentially this: Negro youth who lack estimable symbols, or images, of success can hardly develop the kind of self-image necessary to succeed. In a real sense they tend to become as limited as they perceive themselves to be.

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[20] For a comprehensive analysis of this problem see Eli Ginzberg, *The Negro Potential.* New York: Columbia University Press, 1956, 144 pp.

[21] Myrdal, *op cit.,* p. 28.

Human dignity. The fourth basic value in American culture is the belief in the inherent dignity of all men. As a rule few societies, if any, have done so much as ours to cultivate, preserve, and perpetuate this value. Where Negroes are concerned this value, perhaps more than any other, has met with the most stubborn, deep-seated resistance. Not only has been the custom of segregation and social ostracism applied to every significant aspect of social life in the United States, but what is even more important is the fact that it has been justified by a web of traditional beliefs and pseudoscientific theories that were used to strip the Negro of dignity by condemning him to an inferior human status.[22]

The conception of the Negro has changed greatly since the Civil War; very few respectable scholars express a belief in the inherent inferiority of Negroes. However, certain powerful white individuals and groups do persist in the belief of Negro inferiority in the face of outstanding contributions by Negroes in just about every area of the national life and contrary scientific findings. And so, everywhere, Negroes continue to encounter some degree of indignity stemming from the actual or alleged belief in their inferiority. This is the essential problem of integration. Negroes who meet every qualification to participate in some group, community, or institutional activity generally find themselves rejected as persons or at least ignored to some significant degree. Their desire to become a part of the "we" group is often frustrated long after they have been formally included in the membership.[23]

The particular pattern of rejection of Negroes may vary from one time to another and from one community to another. However, by and large it is composed of the same general characteristics: some degree of corporal punishment, either by the police, zealous individuals, or mobs; public insults, often by politicians; the propaganda of anti-Negro theories or stereotypes; epithets; the refusal to extend Negroes common, simple courtesies (such as calling them "Mr.," "Mrs.," or "Miss"), and, finally, well-calculated sneers.

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[22] Myrdal, *op. cit.,* Chapters 4-6.

[23] Some refer to such a situation as *desegregation,* which is formal admittance, as opposed to *integration,* or informal, personal acceptance.

Except in rare instances Negroes, regardless of their abilities and accomplishments, experience some measure of rejection when they attempt to enter the mainstream of American life. This, of course, has been a perennial cause of the distortions in "Negro culture" and a major barrier to communication.

In response to rigid patterns of segregation and discrimination, Negroes have developed "a society within a society." In order to participate, at least to some degree, in American culture, they have developed their own social structures intended to be facsimiles of those in white society. Since, on the whole, Negroes lack the resources and sustained incentives to duplicate fully certain distinctive traits in the culture at large, their social structures are often poor imitations of similar white social structures. Consequently, every stratum or social level in Negro society is a potential source of significant cultural innovations. Thus for instance, all social scientists who have studied social stratification in the United States have had difficulty comparing the status system among Negroes with that among whites. This difficulty arises, primarily, because Negroes have had to revise, reinterpret, and even substitute distinguishing status criteria generally recognized by white Americans.

The upper class in Negro society is small, having only from 2 to about 5 percent of the Negro population. This social segment would be even smaller if criteria for social class position in society at large were rigidly applied.

In American white society such criteria as family background, income, inherited wealth, social power, conspicuous consumption, and display are basic determinants of upper-class status. Since all of these are more or less inaccessible to Negroes, they have made certain definite substitutions and innovations. Among these are formal education, occupation (particularly if Negroes are pioneering in some occupation), stable family life, "puritanical" manners, and, to some extent, skin color.

In addition to innovations upper-class Negroes have made in regard to the criteria of social status, they have also made expedient innovations in the values characteristic of the white upper class. For example, whereas white upper-class individuals are expected to be conservative on most social issues, upper-class Negroes are expected to lend their support to protest movements and organizations whose main purpose it is to effectuate changes. This is so even when the individual Negro benefits from the status quo. It was in connection with this social contradiction that Myrdal observed that, "The Negro genius is imprisoned in the Negro problem."[24] An example of this imprisonment is the fact that Negroes who benefit most from segregated institutions are expected to be in the forefront of those who seek to abolish segregation.

Perhaps the most important cultural innovation characteristic of the Negro upper class is the compulsion to overemphasize two extreme patterns of behavior: on the one hand, some have developed styles of life that drain their financial and social energy. That is, they live above their financial means and participate in endless social activities.[25] On the other hand, a significant element of the Negro upper class has been characterized as "black puritans." That is to say, they constantly strive to be more than 100 percent American, to exceed middle-class norms.

Middle-class Negroes tend to think of themselves as representatives of the American Creed. They regard themselves as definitely superior to the masses and resent being classified in any situation with lower-class people. They are also critical of the few upper-class Negroes in the community whom they delight in referring to as snobbish, selfish, and undemocratic. Also, they are keenly aware of racial segregation and bitterly resent the "evils" inherent in it. They view segregation as a threat to their ideology of achievement, equality, and progress, and their common reaction can only be a denial of the valuation placed upon race and color. Therefore, their denunciation of racial discrimination, though varying in intensity from one to the other, is always done in terms of a white middle-class value, namely, that it tends to prevent able, ambitious Negroes from achieving the degree of individual success of which they are capable and deserving. They refer to segregation as stupid, and reason that "white people who indulge in it are ignorant and undemocratic." Therefore, by implication, inferior to themselves. Actually, middle-class Negroes express about as much hostility toward lower-class "immoral Negroes who hinder the progress of their race," as they do toward "ignorant white people who believe that all Negroes are alike, and who don't want to see a Negro get ahead of them."[26]

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[24] *Op. cit.*, p. 28.

[25] See E. Franklin, *Black Bourgeoisie*. New York: Collier Books, 1962, 222 pp.

Many middle-class Negroes have some ambivalence toward skin color. On the one hand, having internalized the basic values in American culture, they tend to associate light skin with achievement. On the other hand, since skin color is not in itself an "achievement," to value it is a contradiction to their "success" ideology.

The ambivalence some middle-class Negroes have toward skin color is brought out in the negative attitudes they express toward Negroes at one time or another. Yet, they are careful to use class, not racial symbols in doing so. One among the subjects in *The Eighth Generation* accused Negroes of not being able to acquire and hold property. Another felt that

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[26] Information on the middle class, matriarchy, gang, nuclear family, and marginal individuals is summarized from J. H. Rohrer and M. S. Edmonson (eds.), Daniel C. Thompson *et al., The Eighth Generation.* New York: Harper and Brothers, 1960, 346 pp.

Negroes would enjoy greater civil rights and privileges if they were not so "undependable and immoral." And a third went into a long discussion to prove that "Negroes are their own worst enemy." Clearly they did not, themselves, identify with Negroes as a cultural group. Others did, however, indicate identification with "Negro culture." Sometimes it was done negatively, that is, in a denunciation of some aspect of the doctrine of white supremacy. One of the darker subjects took occasion to talk about the beauty of one of her close relatives who is quite dark. Another took occasion to express great respect for the professional competency of a distinctly Negro person. Several made complimentary statements about character and intelligence of dark-skinned Negroes. At times such statements were so deliberate that interviewers got the impression that the interviewees were spontaneously denying the value they placed upon light skin. Despite the ambivalence these middle-class subjects manifested in regard to skin color, there was no definitive evidence that they had deep feelings of "self hate" as Abram Kardiner reported in his *The Mark of Oppression.*

Perhaps the most serious social pathology characteristic of middle-class Negroes is the fear that they and other Negroes will not measure up, or prove to be equal or superior to white competitors. The result is that they are unreasonably impatient with Negroes who do not behave according to exacting middle-class standards. Also, there is a tendency on their part to try too hard to excel.

The matriarchy is the oldest and most persistent family structure in the Negro community. It had its origin during the slave period when Negroes were not legally regarded as persons and, therefore, could not enter into any legal contract such as marriage. It is true that certain white slave masters, motivated by religious principles, insisted that their slaves should be "married" before living together as "man" and "wife." Nevertheless, such an arrangement, despite some ceremony which might be performed by the slave master or his minister, was not legally binding on the parties concerned. Slave traders or planters who were in the market for slaves did not allow this pseudolegal arrangement to prevent them from trafficking in slaves if it promised to be profitable. Even the most religious slave masters were known to separate "husband" and "wife" when they deemed it economically advisable. Consequently, insofar as the slave family was concerned, it was the mother, not the father, who represented love, stability, and authority.

One of the most significant characteristics of the "social world" of the matriarchy is its inner solidarity. This solidarity is manifested in at least two ways: one, a high degree of cooperation among females and, two, the way in which the males are regarded as "enemies."

Girls reared in a "social world" dominated by the mother regard themselves primarily as *women,* and all other roles are secondary. Their identification with the mother is so strong that their husbands, children, friends, and careers may be sacrificed for what is alleged to be her welfare. This overwhelming identification with the mother colors all their social attitudes.

Men are held in very low esteem by the matriarchs. They habitually refer to men as irresponsible, sexually aggressive, and brutal. One matriarch said, "All men are dogs." And in our interview materials for *The Eighth Generation* we found ample evidence that hers was not a unique attitude. Since matriarchs tend to regard all men as irresponsible and immoral, it is hardly possible for them to internalize middle-class sex attitudes such as loyalty and faithfulness. To them a "boy friend" or husband is likely to be regarded as someone to be exploited since he is not expected to be faithful, and may desert at any time.

Individuals belonging to this family type seldom belong to, or support, organizations whose main purpose is racial uplift, such as the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People. Yet all who were interviewed expressed some degree of dissatisfaction with racial segregation.

But they were unlike the middle-class subjects who opposed segregation primarily because it made them liable to economic and sexual exploitation.

Among the matriarchs there is little evidence of the overriding ambition to succeed that is found in the middle class. Matriarchs may sacrifice to get an education or prepare for a vocation, but there seems to be little or no concept of "calling" involved. Instead, they are motivated by mundane, practical considerations.

Boys in the matriarchy must either conform to what might be called "female patterns" (become "sissies") or renounce the home and identify with the gang and become "men."

The culture of the gang can only be understood in relation to the matriarchy. Just as the matriarchy is primarily organized around some dominant female and all attitudes are colored by identity with what might be referred to as the "female principle" in society, the gang is centered around exclusively "masculine" interests and articulates the "male principle" in society. It is inevitable, then, that the matriarch and the gang should regard each other as "natural enemies," because each is emphatic in its allegiance to mutually exclusive ideologies.

Unlike belonging to a matriarchy where members are bound together by mutual affection, membership in the gang is highly individualistic and each boy must prove himself a man before he is accepted. The main theme in the ethos of the gang is "prove yourself a man. Don't be a sissy. Don't be a woman." Thus, the generalized enemy of the gang is the "female principle" in society. This "principle" seems to be symbolized by women, refined men, laws, morals, religion, education, and the striving for success and respectability.

Manhood is defined in terms of independence, secretiveness, aggressiveness, and sexual prowess. Thus, to be a man means to renounce entirely the "female principle" in society. It involves fear of women, scorn for middle-class standards, and hatred of authority.

Like the matriarchs, gang members have almost no interest in community affairs unless they present some threat to their way of life. None belong to, or support, any community or "uplift" organization. They are aware of racial segregation and on occasions complain bitterly about discrimination. They are touchy around white people and deeply resent being pushed around.

The touchiness which gang members manifest concerning race does not stem from the fact that discrimination violates some conception of justice in which they believe. Rather, their resentment of white people stems from a natural source—white authority is a challenge to their masculinity. Thus, in one way or another, gang members find ways of expressing their hatred of white people who treat them like inferiors or women.

The nuclear family may be found on all social class levels in Negro society. It is most characteristic, however, among Negroes who may be classified as upper-lower or lower-middle class. The strong "we" feeling repeatedly expressed by members of the nuclear family tends to limit their concern for outside persons or issues unless they threaten to intrude upon their private domestic life, or may contribute something to the family welfare.

Characteristically these individuals manifest strong family pride. Some keep written genealogies in family Bibles where important events in the lives of family members are recorded in detail. Others delight in giving long detailed accounts of the adventures and achievements of relatives.

Attitudes concerning skin color were analyzed, and it seems that, on the whole, members of the nuclear family tend to prefer the skin color most characteristic of their own family. They usually depreciate any skin color distinct from their own, whether it is some variation found among Negroes or that typical of Caucasians. All individuals in this "social world" expressed some attitude toward racial segregation. Their opinions differed widely. A few seem to hate white people. Also their attitudes varied from open hate to identification with white people. Yet, all of the racial attitudes expressed had one important element in common—the belief that racial segregation and discrimination is a personal, individual phenomenon rather than the inevitable outcome of an impersonal social system. Nuclear families interpret all incidents involving discrimination as the doings of evil individuals. They define race relations as relations between individuals in a face-to-face situation, such as is characteristic of family members. Discrimination was seldom or never discussed in terms of economic, political, and social ideologies.

A definite double standard of sex morality prevails in the nuclear family. Young people marry early and are encouraged to have children. The men expect the women to maintain high moral standards, yet they may admit openly that they have extramarital relationships.

Some lower-class Negroes, who could be called "marginal" individuals, fail to develop satisfactory self-identity. The failure is evidently due to the fact that during the "identity crisis" period of adolescence they were subject to strong conflicting psychological "pulls" from two diverse "social worlds." Basic values in each of the different "social worlds" contradict or deny certain basic values in the other.

"Marginal" people dramatically struggle to create for themselves a consistent "social world" and self-identity. Presented, as they were during adolescence, with at least two contradictory sets of basic social values, they generally attempt to solve this dilemma in one of two ways. Some spend their lives in a vain effort to synthesize certain social values that are basically inconsistent. Some who have no socially approved criterion for choosing between conflicting sets of social values develop a highly organized bohemian philosophy of life designed to legitimatize the gratification of their narcissistic needs. Consequently, the criterion for selecting among social values is, "It is pleasing to me."

Unlike persons socialized in a given "social world" and identified with a primary social role that colors all of their attitudes, the socially marginal personality has no clearly defined social roles. All roles are, in effect, secondary. Thus, as we observed, if someone structures the situation in terms of color, he reacts to color; if class, he reveals convenient class attitudes; and if it is morality, he expresses himself in terms of morality. The most important common characteristic of the variety of attitudes expressed by those classified as marginals is logical inconsistency with any well-established social frame of reference.

Effective communication presupposes that interacting individuals use, understand, and respond to a common body of symbols. Symbols, whether they are words, acts, pictures, things, or whatever, will vary in meaning from one cultural group to another. Obviously, teachers who have been reared and educated in middle-class environments and have internalized middle-class norms and values, are likely to have great difficulty in establishing productive communication with lower-class, relatively deprived students. This means that despite the cherished ideology of equality of opportunity for all Americans, regardless of race, ethnic origin, or social class, American education is, and always has been, class-oriented. Lower-class American children are actually penalized by the system of education. As a rule, they are either eliminated from schools altogether (dropouts), or they are given what amounts to a lower-class quality of education.

In recent years this technological society has been demanding a larger and larger number of highly trained experts in an increasing number of fields. No longer can this nation afford to have a very small minority of its college students getting top quality education while the great majority of youth are denied college education at all, and most of those who attend college usually get a relatively poor quality of education. The problem is simply stated but very difficult to solve—some way must be found to provide the very highest quality education possible for all normal American youth who would enter college.

Until now teachers have tended to shift the total burden of communication onto the students. Needless to point out, students who come from the more fortunate sociocultural backgrounds succeed because they generally "speak the same language" as do their teachers and have essentially the same understanding and interpretation of other symbols characteristic of the middle-class academic environment. Lower-class, relatively deprived students have no such advantage. Much of the time they are academically isolated because they are unprepared to comprehend what is going on around them. As expected, these students become discouraged and frustrated and fail to live up to their potential. Actually, some of the best schools and colleges have established the reputation of flunking out practically all students except those from the more fortunate sociocultural backgrounds. This reputation, of course, gives great prestige to the small minority of American youth who succeed in these schools, but it is, nevertheless, in direct opposition to this country's democratic commitment.

Teachers in this Nuclear Age are called upon to accept a much greater responsibility for communicating with culturally deprived students. The "best" schools and colleges must become those that find ways of achieving democracy in education, not those that perpetuate class distinctions. In other words, the ultimate test of teaching excellence must not be the degree to which the teacher can communicate with students representing his own social class culture, but rather the degree to which he can establish productive communication with all American students, regardless of how much they have been deprived of middle-class socialization.

The compliment paid Jesus by those who heard him teach is still the highest compliment a teacher can receive: "He spoke with Authority." That is, he spoke the language and interpreted the experiences of his students. He communicated across sociocultural barriers.

The following propositions may be useful to middle-class teachers whose duty it is to communicate with culturally disadvantaged students:

1. The role of education in society must be rethought and redefined. Education is not simply intended to bring happiness, social status, and a higher income to the individual. In addition to these, it must prepare a large army of talented individuals to play essential roles and to do important, necessary jobs for the national strength and well-being.

2. Teachers must seek to discover new dimensions of talents and potentialities among their students. I do not intend at this time to discuss the value of the present testing programs. I am sure that the tests traditionally administered do tell teachers many things they need to know about students. However, I must say that there is some tendency to rely far too much upon the validity of these tests. What I am primarily concerned with at this time is not the validity of the tests, but the question of whether they reveal enough about the vast number of potentialities and talents possessed by children. To illustrate, are tests available that will reveal aptitudes in philosophy, the various art forms, and comedy; the ability to maintain equilibrium in the face of danger; statesmanship; salesmanship, and so forth? There are any number of examples of errors schools have made in flunking out students who later demonstrated unusually valuable talents. Unfortunately, most of the would-be talented youngsters who are flunked out are so discouraged and demoralized that they do not have the ambition and opportunity to prove their genius in vital areas of the society.

3. Teachers should be extremely careful not to stereotype their students, particularly the disadvantaged. Perhaps the most frequent result of stereotyping is prejudice. As a rule, economically deprived children encounter rather deep-seated prejudices when they enter some schools. In some instances, teachers make no secret of the fact that they depreciate the way these children look, the way they talk, and the values they manifest. Teachers should attempt to find ways of overcoming undesirable patterns of behavior in the children with as little damage as possible to their personalities.

4. Teachers must do a better job in communicating with the adults or

parents of disadvantaged children. The purpose and philosophy of the Parent-Teachers Association are in every respect laudable. Nevertheless, teachers are needed who will make the grand principles of the P.T.A. work. In a few schools the P.T.A. is a viable organization, yet I have seldom heard it called a creative organization. This is what it must become if the socially disadvantaged are to be reached.

5. The role of the teacher has been recognized as essential in all societies in history. Disappointingly, the status of the teacher has not always been one of respect and confidence. The truth is, in America the teacher has been traditionally a "stranger," so to speak, in the community. The teacher has been stereotyped as either frustrated or out of touch with reality—absent-minded. In the past teachers were seldom consulted when community decisions were to be made or public policy formulated. If teachers are to serve the demanding function of extending quality education to the socially disadvantaged, their organizations must concern themselves a great deal more than they have in the past with power and the use of power. Bluntly, teachers ought to be prepared to fight for the rights of the underprivileged children they are committed to teach.

A Summer English Program in Birmingham

John U. Monro

I have been asked to describe briefly a program of English instruction I have been working on this summer at Miles College in Birmingham, Alabama. Miles is a privately endowed, church-supported, commuter college with a regular winter enrollment of 900 Negro students, virtually all of them from Birmingham and nearby towns. The Birmingham schools are still segregated, to all intents and purposes. And 2,000 Negro students graduate each June from the segregated high schools. What the faculty at Miles finds is that a great many of these youngsters have been badly shortchanged along the way in learning English. A dismaying proportion of them, though they may be quick and bright and earnest as students, are at the ninth- or tenth-grade level in English skills when they graduate from high school. I cannot be sure whether the slowed progress is due to the segregation of the system or whether Birmingham schools suffer the same difficulties as most big, industrial city schools. But I am in no doubt that at Miles a special problem is posed by hundreds of high school graduates with subpar skills in English. Thus our effort at Miles has been to try to develop a booster-shot program for the summer period between high school and college, and a special remedial and enrichment program for the freshman year.

Granted, the effort to strengthen English skills ought to begin much earlier than age 17 or 18. Yet, as a college officer and teacher, I am intensely aware of a problem that exists and can be worked on at the high school grade levels, where a college teacher has some competence. It would be better to start the work in the primary grades, but until it is begun then, I will not be ready to give up on remedial work at the high school age. Our experience at Miles suggests that a great deal can be done for high school students in one summer, and I am particularly impressed by the proposals now abroad that college teachers continue their work with highschoolers in Saturday schools conducted throughout the academic year.

Miles College calls the summer program a "basic skills workshop." In the early spring the dean studied the school records and standardized test results in mathematics and English of 400 high school seniors who had expressed an interest in attending Miles in the fall. More than 200 students were deemed to be deficient, one way or another, and were strongly urged to come to the summer workshop if they wished to be full-credit, full-program students in college. Thus we had an enrollment of about 200 students this summer. They came to school every day, Monday through Friday, from 8:30 a.m. to 1 p.m., for six weeks. The mathematics staff had one hour a day, the reading staff one hour, and the English grammar and writing staff two hours each day. The staff in English included one experienced teacher from the Miles College faculty, one young woman with the degree Master of Arts in Teaching[1] and a brief experience in high school teaching, and six young graduate students, some with experience teaching college freshman English, some without.

Our program gave us an uninterrupted two-hour period in English with each student and allowed us to work with them, if we wished to, in lecture groups of 100 or in small sections of 12 to 15. Most of the time was spent in sections, and a fair amount of the time in sections was spent writing in class.

I am one who believes that people learn to write by writing, not by talking about writing or reading about writing (just as they learn to play the piano by doing it, not by watching Van Cliburn on television). Thus it had been my hope, when the summer began, that we could get two brief papers a day from each student: one written in class on a subject that had been developed in class discussion, and another brief paper written each night at home. These were to be papers of one carefully constructed paragraph. In class, my favorite device is to try to provoke a brainstorming discussion and an accumulation of ideas (from a poem, a topic in the news, a simple problem of description, or, best of all, a good painting) and to let the class run on talking for 15 to 30 minutes, while I record the students' ideas on the board. When there are enough ideas laid out to make a good paragraph—indeed, to allow a selection for building one of several possible paragraphs—we stop brainstorming and start looking for relationships between the ideas and for possible topic sentences. Then we set to and write for 10 minutes. It doesn't matter much whether any given paper is original and bright. What I am looking for is a plain, early statement of a topic, point, or proposition, followed by sentences that bear it out. And, of course, the class exercise of provoking ideas, recording them randomly on the board, and trying to trace threads of relationship among them is meant to give students practice, and more practice, and yet more practice, in the way anybody has to go about thinking and writing. I hope the exercise shows students where topic sentences come from—out of the raw stuff of ideas, not out of the blue.

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[1] I am particularly impressed by the special usefulness of the training, experience, and attitudes of people with the M.A.T. degree for work in the freshman and sophomore years of many colleges which are attempting to do remedial and enrichment work for underprivileged students.

The plan to have two papers a day broke down in practice, and any teacher will already have guessed why. The burden of paper correction was just too much. Each of the young teachers had 30 students to worry about, and two papers a day would have meant a total of 60 papers a day to read and comment on. Even though the papers were quite short, the teachers had trouble mastering the art of the quick reading of a one-paragraph paper, a quick reading for essential structure, and not a reading for details or for close editing. In any case the assignments fell off to one paper a day. Perhaps it was enough.

We also had the students try their hand at one somewhat longer paper each week, 500 to 600 words, three paragraphs or so, to be done over the weekend and handed in on Monday. We would work toward this assignment for three or four days, beginning Wednesday with class discussions and preliminary one-paragraph papers written in class or out. Again, our effort was to promote not so much originality as the orderly development and recording of ideas, the sorting over of ideas to discover relationships, and the stating of topics to be supported within each paragraph.

The staff decided not to grade any of the short daily papers, but once a week to give students a grade on the longer papers. I think this was a wise compromise. A grade once a week, on a major effort, provided students with a useful stimulus, something familiar in an otherwise quite strange pedagogical effort.

Considerable time was spent with the students in individual conferences, primarily over problems in the papers. All of them were seen at least twice during the summer, and a great many were seen once a week for short conferences. In teaching of this kind, the individual conference cannot be beat as a way of getting at the student's particular problems and helping him work through them.

We chose the paragraph—its organization and development from raw ideas—as the beach head for the six-week summer campaign, although we knew that we had to cope with many smaller problems, for instance, sentence construction, word endings and agreement, and so on. But we thought that moving in at once on the paragraph would give us a double advantage. Most of our students had not studied the paragraph before, at least not more than cursorily and formally. It would be new ground, to be attacked in a fresh way. No one would be encumbered at the outset by all the echoes and inhibitions arising from years of rote memorization of rules. Working with the structure and the generation of the paragraph would give us a chance to explore directly the world of ideas, a stimulating world, indeed a fun world, especially when contrasted to the familiar classroom world of rote learning.

We were absolutely right to start with the paragraph. Our students were intrigued by this new gadget, excited to be talking and writing about ideas and not just memorizing rules. It was a good start.

But, two weeks out, when we tried to settle down to the nitty-gritty and deal with the sentence and details of language, we found ourselves in trouble.

It is fair to say that we did not solve our central pedagogical problem this summer in any systematic way. In fact, each teacher, faced with the problem, tended to work out his own solution, and some were demonstrably more successful than others. But at least the problem can now be sketched with some accuracy and realism. Most of our students in Birmingham live intellectually in an oral rather than a disciplined written milieu. A look at their tests and papers will lead to the conclusion, quite rightly, that many of them cannot read or write well. But the problem is more complicated than that, and more interesting, and more promising. The truth is, these same students *think* quite well. They get excited about ideas, and they love to talk about them. But when they come to write the ideas down, the results often resemble bad transcription. In short, like all people, these students have an undisciplined flow of verbal sounds rushing around in their minds. The sad fact is that in 12 years of schooling many of them have not learned to subject this interior flow of sounds to any effective visual discipline when transcribing them onto paper. They have spent endless hours memorizing rules that are meant to discipline the march of words onto paper. But somehow the rules, so important in themselves, so carefully memorized, have never become functional or connected with the act of writing.

Probably the most fascinating grammatical problem we ran into was the agreement of subject and verb, or the use of the proper verb form. Most of the students could be relied on to produce the proper root, or infinitive, form. But there was often no rhyme or reason for the verb endings that showed up on paper. My own half-frivolous conclusion was that in a hot climate there is an understandable tendency in conversation to clip off all the endings of words, just to conserve energy. In any case we observed that in ordinary conversation our students did not bother much with verb endings. The oral vocabulary is one mainly of root words, without endings. When a student writes a verb on paper, he knows there are a number of possibilities for endings (-s, -ed, -ing), but he has had little practice in verb endings and is not sure what to use, so he mentally flips a coin to decide.

My main effort with my class was to have them write short, simple sentences. In this effort it was actually a help that the students had learned so well to define the kinds and parts of sentences. My job was to make this hard-won knowledge functional. After they had learned to put their ideas in short, simple sentences, they worked on more complicated sentences, with problems of subordination and emphasis.

I fancy the study of the sentences and the paragraphs was useful, but I am under no delusion that we made any progress on verb endings.

The reading in the course was important, and a matter of some disagreement within the staff. Our first book was the early *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass, An American Slave.* Douglass was the great American Negro abolitionist leader of the nineteenth century. The *Narrative* is an account of his experience as a slave in Maryland in the years from 1817 or 1818 to 1838, and of his escape north to New York and New Bedford, Massachusetts. I consider this early Douglass book to be an American classic, and fortunately it is now available in an inexpensive paperback.[2] We also relied upon a paperback book for Robert Frost's poems.[3] Toward the end we read some of the essays in W. E. B. DuBois's famous early collection, *The Souls of Black Folk,* available also as a paperback.[4] As part of this reading the students were asked to take sides on the controversy of 1905-1915 between DuBois and Booker T. Washington, on how the Negro people could best make progress toward a position of strength and equality in American life.

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[2] New York: Doubleday & Company, Inc. (Dolphin), 1963, 124 pp.

[3] *Anthology of Robert Frost's Poems,* rev. ed. by Louis Untermeyer. New York: Washington Square Press, 1964, 280 pp.

Frost's poetry was a good choice, a way of making our students aware of what poetry is and what a poet is trying to do. Frost's language is contemporary and deceptively easy, of course—and discovering its underlying complexity is part of the illumination. Most of the students had read one or two of Frost's poems in school, for instance, "The Road Not Taken" or "Stopping By Woods," but they didn't have any sense of the body of his work or of his darker side. They read a great deal of his poetry, and I think all of them learned from it. I believe I would not use that particular edition of Frost's poems again, for unfortunately the editor's comments along the way kept preconditioning the students' reactions to the poems. But it was a useful idea to concentrate on one poet.

In choosing the Douglass and the DuBois books I knew I was giving the reading a strong racial emphasis, but this fact did not trouble me. The issues we discussed are critical issues in American social history, of especial importance for our students in Birmingham to know about. As it turned out they had not heard of Frederick Douglass, knew very little about DuBois except that he had become a Communist, and indeed knew very little about Booker T. Washington. One day I asked a class of about a hundred students how many had read Martin Luther King Jr.'s book about the Montgomery bus strike, *Stride Toward Freedom: The Montgomery Story*.[5] Only about five students had read it.

The struggle of the Negro people in this country for emancipation from slavery, and following that for a position of strength and equality in its society, is one of the great epic struggles in the long, troubled history of humanity. We Americans live too close to this struggle and are too involved in it to see it as an epic. But there can be no doubt of the scale, the grandeur, the bitterness, the intensity, the passion, and the final success of this struggle—and, as James Baldwin has well noted, of its ultimate consequence for all mankind. If we Americans, white or Negro, are to understand our own history, our own epic struggle, we must come to know our great Negro leaders, know what they were up against and what they sought to do, and come to know their qualities of mind and spirit.

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[4] New York: Fawcett World Library (Crest R699), 1964, 192 pp.

[5] New York: Harper & Bros., 1958, 230 pp.

So I would say that any course in American literature that does not include a study of Frederick Douglass, Booker T. Washington, W. E. B. DuBois, and Martin Luther King Jr. stands convicted of ignoring truly great works in our national epic.

The Douglass book is worth a special note, for it could and should be important in all schools. It's a short book, a young man's book. Frederick Douglass escaped North when he was about 20 years old, and this book is an account of his experiences as a slave, as a plantation field worker and a city worker in Baltimore, up to the time of his escape. Douglass wrote the best account I have ever seen of the condition of slaves and slaveholders in the South during the flood tide of slavery, in the years before the Civil War. The *Narrative* is a straightforward and simply written book, the product of a vigorous, observant, disciplined, compassionate mind. It abounds in careful portraits of individual white and Negro people caught up in the dreadful relationship of slavery, and provides the very best sort of raw material for classroom discussions of the corruption that comes with power. It is an utterly convincing book which can give all of us, Negro and white alike, a new comprehension of the tragic and evil beginnings of our nation's present grave social agony.

Douglass' *Narrative* turned out to be a hard book for young white teachers to present, especially in their first experience with a class of

Negro students. Most of the young teachers felt that teaching it involved an uncomfortable degree of "presumption" on their part. Further, most of them felt that the book was not of sufficient literary merit to justify its use in a course in writing. Needless to say we had some sharp staff discussions about the book. I am sure the younger members left those discussions feeling that I was a stubborn and heavy-handed man, overconcerned with the civil rights struggle to the point where it had affected my judgment of literature. On my side I came to feel that graduate schools these days have too narrow a view of what is literature.[6]

The Washington-DuBois controversy provided a chance for fairly lively debates in class and also allowed the lives and efforts of two significant American leaders to be sketched out for the students. DuBois's book, *The Souls of Black Folk,* is much harder to read than Douglass' *Narrative,* but it had virtues for these classes. First of all, *Souls of Black Folk* is also a young man's book, written by DuBois when he was fresh out of university graduate studies and was teaching at Atlanta University. One essay in particular, "On the Meaning of Progress," was an immediate favorite with the students. In it DuBois tells how, as an undergraduate at Fisk, he taught summers in the back country of Tennessee, in a little country school. The title of the essay is sardonic, for DuBois is describing the condition of Negro back-country farmers about 1890. It was a low point in the condition of Negro people in the United States, and DuBois's message is that there had indeed been very little progress since 1865. But DuBois got caught up in the lives of his small pupils and wrote warmly and feelingly about them. The students enjoyed the essay and took the occasion to discuss what gains, if any, had been made by 1890 over the circumstances of 60 years earlier described by Douglass.

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[6] I was much reassured by a discussion in December 1965, with 15 of the students we had taught the previous summer. I told them frankly of the staff difficulties over the Douglass book and asked them whether they would recommend using the book again. The students' opinion was unanimous that the book should be used, that it had been of great value to them, and that for their part they had not sensed any special embarrassment or difficulty in having the book presented as it was.

Although the accomplishments of our six-week summer effort were hard to measure, the staff felt that many of the students had made appreciable gains in their ability to generate ideas, to turn ideas into notes, and to organize notes into sentences and paragraphs. The evaluation was subjective, and teachers who have worked so hard and faithfully may be guilty of mistaking hopes for reality. I went through the same experience, and I share in the assessment and probably the mirage. We all felt that something like progress had been made in paragraphing, but we were not as sure we had made any progress on the problems of sentences and word-endings. We gave the Cooperative English Test of Educational Testing Service (Forms 2A and 2B) at the beginning and end of the teaching period, and the test seemed to say that two-thirds of our students had gained ground over the summer. Indeed, one-third made overall gains amounting to an improvement of 15 percentile points or better. I am not sure just what these figures mean, and I would rather rely on my subjective feeling that the papers got quite a lot better as the students kept practicing. Nonetheless, the test results were gratifying.

I have never known such students in all my life. Attendance ran well over 95 percent day after day, through the summer heat. Many students had to ride the city buses an hour and a half to arrive by 8:30, and another hour and a half to get home. Numbers of them left at 1 p.m. to go do a full day's work on a job, then try to do their homework and snatch a little sleep, and get back to the college at 8:30. No matter the heat or the difficulties or the fatigue, they kept coming. The graduate-student staff studied their students, adapted their teaching day by day to what seemed to be working, and in the end were richly rewarded. Three of the summer staff volunteered to stay to teach freshman English at Miles College during the fall term.

Now that I am done, I sense what a rambling and unfocused account I have given of the summer's work. Yet perhaps there will have been a detail here or there that may be useful to others. For my own part I hope I have made clear that working with these 200 students and this devoted staff was one of the most rewarding personal and professional experiences I have known.

Workshops and Follow-ups

Warner G. Rice

The main purpose of this paper is to propose means by which those who teach English in colleges and universities can be brought into a more fruitful association with their colleagues in the secondary and elementary schools, and more particularly to describe how such an association can be encouraged in the teachers' institutes planned for the future. The discussion of this topic will be prefaced, however, by some observations about the humanities and the present relation of English to them, and by the description of an evolving pattern in American education. The aim of this preamble is to draw attention to the necessity for arousing the whole profession to make a fresh assessment of its responsibilities. Techniques of cooperation become significant only when the ends of cooperation are themselves valuable and well defined.

Much has been said of late, and much is being said still, about the necessity of providing support for the humanities. In many of the arguments used to justify such support, however, as in many of the appeals for aid, one may detect a disturbing note of "me-tooism." It is certainly true that the sciences are heavily subsidized, that generous grants are available for research in medicine or astronomy, and that behavioral studies get all the money they need. Not surprisingly the question arises, "Why not the humanities as well?" In taking this line, many of the advocates of humanistic studies assume that the strength of their case is self-evident—that it need only be stated to be accepted.

In this confidence lies a danger. For the arguments commonly proposed in defense of the humanities (and for the extension of English, the most influential of humane studies) do not appear flawless when they are subjected to a realistic analysis. What are these arguments? A few, at least, can be sketched.

The special virtue of the humanities is commonly supposed to be the understanding they provide concerning those phenomena that are specifically human. They help to define what constitutes a human nature that is distinguishable from other natures, and thus to gauge the human potential. The discoveries of the last century have cast some doubt, however, upon the assumption that either the human potential, or human aims, are unchanging; so that the question arises as to whether a study of the Greeks of the fourth century B.C. actually reveals much about the constitution of man as he appears in the latter part of the twentieth—a creature who controls, to a degree hitherto undreamed of, his environment, and who belongs to a kind of society never paralleled in the past.

Again, the humanities have been cherished as the repositories of tradition, the transmitters of ancient and more proximate wisdoms, the guides to conduct. There can be little doubt that the function of humane learning has been conservative. In the present age, however, the number of those who are convinced that the past has important lessons to teach is diminishing. As a matter of practice, many have concluded that in this time of frighteningly rapid change most of the past is irrelevant. Moreover, in practice the recovery of the past becomes more and more difficult (since our culture moves away from it more and more swiftly), and since values have shifted, there is no agreement as to what is worth recovering—except among antiquarians, who would recover everything, for recovery's sake. It may also be observed that as far as the effective management of human society and government is concerned, the humanities have contributed less than their exponents claim. The great problems of the time—poverty, the exhaustion of natural resources through the demands of swarming populations, wars, racial conflicts, the clash of ideologies—are more likely to be solved through improvements in technology, economic planning, the findings of sociologists and psychologists, the advancement of medicine, and so on than by the speculations of philosophers and historians, or by the influence of literature and the arts.

What, indeed, is now to be expected from literature—a subject that certainly holds a high place in humane education? Do its professors promise that it will provide a criticism of life, a useful induction into experience? Does it illuminate the mind with ideas or temper the conscience? The answer must often be in the negative. If much of the past experience of the species appears irrelevant, then a great deal of literature is of small utility. The prevailing fashion in our profession is to limit literature to belles lettres and to study these on the understanding that they are not to be related closely to life. They must be thought of as constructs and examined dispassionately to discover their patterns of images, motifs, symbols, words, and style. When they are interpreted in terms of conduct or used as descriptions of the human condition, the critic invokes the behavioral sciences, being scrupulous to note every trace of the Freudian ego and id or the Jungian archetype. The book becomes a casebook.

On a more practical level, the humanities, it is supposed, ought to foster the arts of clear thought, articulate expression, and accurate communication. It would be reassuring if those who have been humanely educated always possessed these powers, which it is presumed the study of English composition, in particular, generates. As a matter of fact, the teaching of English along traditional lines often provides little more than elementary experience in a second language (standard English) to persons who have been brought up in environments where mass media, local dialects, and professional jargon have set the standards and the tone for discourse. The importance of these facts has just begun to be acknowledged, and a question raised as to whether the attempt to establish correct habits in composition for the public at large is worth the cost. There can be little doubt that in our society communication is increasingly managed through the use of pictures, graphs, computers, tapes, formulas, telephones, and other such media, or that the great body of serious writing is already in the hands of professionals.

These generalizations call for expansion and documentation, of course. But perhaps without such elaboration many will accept them as not unfair indicators of the kind of problems that must be dealt with promptly and convincingly if the teaching of English is to be justified as a part of general education, or liberal education, and indeed of professional education in graduate schools, where knowledge is inculcated and techniques of inquiry are developed, but where little attention is given to ends and aims. Insofar as this description is correct, it does not warrant any hope that either the humanities (as they are commonly understood) or English will enjoy a prosperous future.

Perhaps one reason for doubt lies in the knowledge that fewer and fewer teachers are being trained nowadays by professors primarily concerned about the larger problems of contemporary education or deeply engaged with the special problems of the English classroom. Personal and institutional ambitions, the desire for status and prestige, have led to the transformation of teachers' colleges (which once bore the chief responsibility for the preparation of teachers for the primary and secondary schools) into liberal arts colleges, and of these into universities, where the image of the English professor as ingenious critic or productive scholar dominates the scene. One of the marks of a successful career on these campuses is relief from the ardors and burdens of teaching assignments, as well as from any obligation to worry about academic statesmanship and strategy. In consequence, at the time when more and more responsibility lies with the university, old or new, for the proper education and direction of teachers, only a small fraction of professional energy is devoted to the task. Certainly not many of those who now enter the various fields of teaching through departments of English are encouraged to specialize in what is unattractively named "English Education," and it is even more certain that not many do so specialize.

To be sure, there are hopeful signs. The institutes supported through the National Defense Education Act, like the institutes of the Commission on English which preceded them, provide evidence that goes counter to the views just expressed. Such evidence may in time be conclusive. As yet, however, colleges and universities have not in any significant way established as a regular component of their programs and at their own expense anything like the summer institutes, or assigned more than a few influential members of their staffs to apply themselves to similar work. In the vast majority of cases, institutes have been inspired by agencies outside the college or university, have derived their support from outside, and have been regarded by both professors and administrators as special and occasional projects.

No doubt more outside support will be forthcoming, and no doubt the major portion of it will be in the form of government grants. Since "free" money has its attractions, departments of English will continue to seek these subsidies. The implications of this arrangement need not be feared, but they should certainly be understood. The first point to be clearly made is that, on the whole, the representatives of federal agencies are and will be interested chiefly in using the educational establishment in the development of programs designed not for the realization of some vaguely stated cultural ideal, but for social service and social reform.

There are obvious reasons for such a policy, and a historical warrant for it. From the first beginnings of public education in this country social utility has been a directing force. Within this century the schools have been used to Americanize an immigrant population, to adjust rising generations quickly to new conditions of social and economic life, to serve as health centers, to supply wholesome food and recreation, to mitigate the distresses of the Depression, to counsel and guide young people, to grapple with problems of delinquency, to prepare youths for the labor market or to keep them off it, and so on. What is true of the schools is also true, to a marked degree, of institutions of higher learning. But in the latter the idea of service can be carried further, in centers for fisheries research or the study of municipal government, or through the acceptance of contracts for the design of guidance systems for ICBMs. Examples might be multiplied. If anyone doubts their force, he need only reflect upon the use of the educational establishment for the advancement of civil rights policies and the relation of this endeavor to the purposes of education as they would once have been defined.

These observations are fully confirmed by reports from recent White House conferences on education, and by the pronouncements of successive Commissioners of Education. Many recent discussions of school problems are obviously sociological. They focus upon illiteracy and dropouts, the decline of the inner city, juvenile delinquency, desegregation, and the like. Vice President Hubert Humphrey and other administration spokesmen have more than once underlined these concerns, with emphasis on the principle that a nation that believes in justice must see that those on the bottom receive more. The intention of Washington officials to act on this principle is clearly evident in the kind of support that is at once forthcoming for almost any project designed to aid the disadvantaged.

The education of the masses swarming into schools and colleges will doubtless be subsidized (by both direct and indirect means) more and more generously by Congress. And with tax money will come a measure of control. In commenting on plans for federal testing to assess educational results, Commissioner of Education Francis Keppel once asserted that, "The nation's taxpayers and their representatives in Congress will want to know —and have every right to know—whether their investment [in grants for education] is paying off." At first glance, this expectation appears reasonable enough. But since examinations establish not only standards of achievement, but also the character of the matter that is taught and the ends toward which instruction is directed, whoever sets national examinations is in a position to develop a pattern for American education.

There are prophets who believe that a national pattern will emerge very soon. In a recent address (as yet unpublished) on "The Cybernetic Revolution and Education," William D. Boutwell made this interesting prediction:

"The U. S. Office of Education manufactures nothing and yet is asking for and no doubt will get a battery of computers. Why? Commissioner Keppel is charged with administration of $3.5 billion for education. That money must be used where it will do the most good. Since education is expected to prepare youth to function in the future—the 70s, 80s, and 90s—shrewd guesses must be made about what life will be like then so that education prepares them for that life. How then will these guesses be made? By local school boards? By state departments of education? It is not likely. The guesses will be made largely in Washington with the aid of computers.

"This is how it will be done. Into the computers will be fed large chunks of basic statistics—birth rates, life expectancy, production trends, data on urbanization, cost of living, employment, etc., etc. The computers will spin and out will come data for a 'model.' The 'model' will describe conditions of life in the United States in the future and with this data Commissioner Keppel and his associates will draft a trial 'model' for American education. Using the resources of a number of satellite universities and some state education departments, the Office of Education will then refine this trial 'model' or 'design' into a firm national *model.* And then federal money for subsidies and research plus persuasion will be used to lead or push American schools into a pattern to fit the *model.*"

Such a prediction may never come true, but it is not an absurd or unrealizable prediction. Ten years ago it would have seemed fantastic. Today it sounds possible. Ten years hence—who knows?

Thus far it has been argued that not much has been done of late to justify or describe the humanities in terms of contemporary relevance, to agree upon the ways to advance humane studies through the teaching of literature or other branches of "English," or to insure the successful communication of this subject through the systematic preparation of well-qualified teachers. Yet in common with other fields of learning English will be put to the test of utility in an educational system increasingly supported by public funds for pragmatic ends, often defined in terms of social reform.

If English is to be thus tested, it follows that those who belong to the teaching profession should make intelligent efforts to direct the course of events. There must be a strong continuing endeavor to agree on the total purpose of the English curriculum, the best ways of developing it, and the most effective means for operating it. This endeavor will require cooperation within schools and between schools, between schools and colleges, and more particularly between those who are in charge of the training of teachers (for all kinds of assignments) and those who are contriving curriculums and directing the persons who implement them.

Unquestionably an increasing responsibility for teacher training, and for the correlation of effort between those who train and those who are trained, will now fall upon colleges of liberal arts and universities. As far as English is concerned, this responsibility has long been regarded as basic by the largest of the professional societies, the National Council of Teachers of English. More recently the Modern Language Association has made a similar acknowledgment. There are, of course, also a number of extremely vigorous regional associations that accept this obligation. The proportion of college and university teachers deeply involved and active in such groups is, however, still relatively small. It is obvious that if the whole profession is to plan and work together, there must be not only first-rate leadership but also a much wider participation.

How can such participation be assured? Here are some suggestions.

1. Systematic analysis, by representatives of all groups in the profession, of developing problems and issues, not only in the study and teaching of English, but in the entire educational establishment as well.

2. Increased cooperation between departments of English and departments of education, especially in the strategy and methods of teacher training.

3. Increased attention, in departments of English, to programs of English education—more participation on the part of staff members, and greater efforts to enlist the interest of candidates for higher degrees.

4. Continuing scrutiny and modification of programs in English for the purpose of improving their humanistic content and increasing their practical value to teachers.

5. The development of better lines of communication and procedures for interaction between the several parts of the educational establishment—universities, colleges, secondary schools, elementary schools—through such means as school visiting, provision for consultation services, exchanges of staff members, seminars, conferences, and institutes.

Each of these items merits detailed attention, but it is impossible to do justice to them within the limits imposed here. However, attention will be directed to two matters likely to be of particular interest to the organizers of institutes—workshops and follow-up programs.

In planning its teacher-training institutes for the summer of 1962, the Commission on English introduced two features intended both to improve rapport between university and secondary school teachers and to strengthen the curriculum offered in the classroom. These features were the workshop, which was to be carried on in conjunction with the institute's formal courses, and the follow-up program, through which members of the institute staff were to continue the summer's work by visits to the schools from which the teacher participants had come. The workshop was to have the specific function of helping the teacher translate what he had learned from books, discussions, and lectures into exercises and curriculum units that would be of direct use to him in his own classroom. The aim of the follow-up program was threefold: first, to acquaint university teachers of teachers with the conditions that their students confronted in the secondary schools; second, to enable them to meet administrative officers of the schools from which participants had come in order to emphasize the importance of the

Commission's teacher-training program, and to stress the necessity for giving those who had engaged in it full support; and finally, to enable the university visitors to observe what the teachers with whom they had worked were accomplishing in their classrooms, to encourage and criticize their efforts, and to appraise (among other things) the usefulness of the materials developed in the workshops.

When the appraisals of the 1962 institutes had been reviewed, it was apparent that neither the workshops nor the follow-up programs had proved entirely successful. Some of their defects can readily be specified and explained. To begin with the follow-up visits, it must be acknowledged that the university teachers who engaged in them were often entirely unprepared for what they found in the schools; as a consequence they suffered a cultural shock which limited their effectiveness. Moreover the time required for getting on easy terms with busy school administrators was greater than they had expected, particularly when the points of view to which they had to adjust themselves were very far removed from their own. Since the teacher participants in each institute had been drawn from 40 or more schools, the number of hours that could be spent in each was too limited to permit any visitor to make a very deep impression. He could not, of course, prudently begin to suggest far-reaching reforms (or even modest changes) to principals or supervisors until he had thoroughly appraised the local situation and had put himself on good terms with the school staff. In most cases, therefore, his advice to administrators was limited to a relatively few suggestions. In his attempts to establish helpful relations with the individual teacher he was scarcely better off. He could not expect to see any individual frequently (two or three visits were the maximum for the most conscientious), and consequently he could not canvass very thoroughly the whole program in which the teacher was engaged, or even arrange matters so that he could observe adequately the use of new materials and methods. Since his presence in the classroom sometimes proved inhibiting, a visitor was occasionally moved to teach a class himself, with the teacher as critic. This expedient, though stimulating, did not really carry out the purposes of the follow-up program.

School visitors accomplished something by conferences with teachers in groups, and it was sometimes possible to assemble a whole department to discuss part of the curriculum or a particular procedure. More directly in line with the aim of the institutes were the meetings (sometimes a luncheon or dinner) to which all the participants in a particular institute were invited so that they might review together the summer's work and report on the success of innovations that they had introduced in their classes.

One variant of the plans sketched above proved effective as a sequel to a summer institute (not sponsored by the Commission) that brought together participants from 20 neighboring communities. In this instance a fall extension course was offered for the teachers who had been members of the institute. They paid fees and received credit for a series of Saturday morning classes, some held on the university campus, the rest in one or another of the schools represented. The teachers who were enrolled in the course would journey from one community to another, observing how their fellows lived and discussing the problems of the English curriculum as they manifested themselves in different academic environments—parochial schools, private schools, suburban schools, big city schools. The subject matter of the course was like that presented in the summer courses. An important part of the program was the analysis of results achieved when the lessons learned during institute sessions were applied in secondary school classes. For this analysis panels were organized and reports assigned. The success of the project can be attributed to several factors: the leadership of a very skillful professor, the cohesiveness of the group, and the relatively small size of the area from which its members were drawn.

Even in this modest enterprise the university leader was severely handicapped because he could devote to the program only a fraction of his time and strength. Under favorable conditions an experienced visitor can properly serve no more than 10 or 12 schools each semester if he gives his entire attention to the business. Few departments of English have such teachers on their rosters or, if they employ them, can spare them for service in the field. Until such help is forthcoming, however, the use of follow-up visits in connection with institutes will be inadequate for the realization of anything like the full potential of the plan.

From the brief account just given, it is apparent that follow-up activities were planned by the Commission on too small a scale. As a result, the expectations on both sides were not well met. The visitor, employed for one-half his time for three or four months, could not hope to do justice to the work of 40 or more teachers. The teachers, hoping for aid not simply in the conduct of their teaching but in their attempts to reform the curriculum as well, eager to get relief from oppressive extra duties and to reduce class size, were disappointed because the visitor proved ineffective with respect to these matters.

It can be concluded that a follow-up program, if it is to be as good in fact as it is in theory, must engage the services of an expert on secondary school teaching and provide him with generous opportunities to carry out his assignment. He must establish rapport both with school administrators and department heads. He must become acquainted with many local problems. He must meet not only with individual teachers but also with entire departments in the schools he visits and must be able to deal with large issues as well as with the details of classroom practice. Such professional services are relatively expensive, though well worth the cost. If follow-up work must be attempted on a very limited budget, it can probably best be carried on in group meetings for institute participants, not through infrequent school visits, which may well prove frustrating rather than helpful.

The reluctance of the U. S. Office of Education to sponsor follow-up programs in connection with the NDEA teacher institutes held in the summer of

1965 is regrettable. Enough experience was gained with such programs in the fall of 1962 and at subsequent times to justify the belief that they can supply an essential element in the development of better school programs in English and of better teachers of the subject. The teacher who has attended an institute often returns to his department confident and eager to propose new ideas, only to be discouraged by a complete lack of interest on the part of his colleagues. A strong seconding of his suggestions and purposes by an authoritative voice from outside may make all the difference. If a college or university that has demonstrated its desire to improve teaching through the offering of an institute can supply such a voice, it should certainly do so—even if the cost must be charged to its own budget rather than to federal funds.

Like the follow-up programs, the workshops organized as a part of the Commission's institutes of 1962 were inadequate because of a lack of experience on the part of their directors and because insufficient time was allotted to them. Though the planning of workshops had not been neglected in 1961, university teachers were more fully qualified to deal with, and much more interested in, other parts of the curriculum. Few had had any direct acquaintance with workshop activities or any adequate conception of the time and effort required for their supervision. Six- or eight-week sessions allowed little time for either the supervisors or the participating teachers to find their footing, especially since serious attention to workshop matters usually had to be postponed until courses were well under way. Everyone was kept extremely busy with lectures and classroom assignments, and unfortunately the need for full collaboration between other instructors and the workshop's director was often not well understood. Though there was general agreement that the institute workshop should be the place where knowledge newly gained might be digested into materials and techniques likely to be of use in the schools, the methods by which this end could be best accomplished, and often the objectives as well, were not precisely defined. Further, in an effort to provide practice in every subject studied, participants were often encouraged to produce a considerable quantity of material before preliminary discussions had made clear what might be of genuine profit. In consequence many projects were hastily worked up and put into print without testing and without a thorough critical review.

These faulty practices, though obvious enough in retrospect, could not have been fully anticipated. It is not unusual, in the experimental stage of any academic program, to undertake too much, and it is not surprising that the ambitions of many institute teachers outran their discretion. The amount of time that could regularly be devoted to workshop activities was small. Any assumption that a majority of the participants in 1962 would apply themselves through long hours of effort with the dedicated zeal exhibited by the planners of 1961 had to be abandoned very early. Many of the teachers attending institutes had heavy domestic responsibilities. A considerable number, finding it impossible to live near university campuses, commuted each day at the expense of much time and effort, thus eliminating the possibility of informal afternoon and evening seminars; and there were other claims that interfered with overtime work.

It is not difficult to suggest correctives. In the first place, participants in NDEA institutes receive subsidies sufficiently large so that most of them can afford to remain in residence, and the great majority should be required to do so. Second, only modest projects should be undertaken. If a workshop is to operate concurrently with courses, the syllabus should be reduced to a manageable compass. Third, full cooperation between all the instructors concerned in the institute should be mandatory, and each professor offering a course should be in close touch with the workshop director. Fourth, the workshop director's assignment should be of a character that will permit him to give adequate attention to his duties. He should certainly not be expected to supervise workshop activities as a sideline.

The definition of the scope of a particular workshop is the director's first responsibility, to be carried out in consultation with participants but not simply improvised to accommodate their diverse interests. That is, a workshop may be oriented toward the development of a curriculum for a specific group in a specific environment, for instance, for a program of "general English" in the eleventh and twelfth grades or for the creation of materials for the teaching of language in junior high school. It can well begin with the establishment of aims and a survey of relevant studies and materials. Assuming that it proceeds concurrently with courses, the discussion of how particular principles can be applied may begin early. If matters are so arranged that the chief workshop activity comes after the completion of courses, so much the better. Much of the actual development of exercises and lesson plans can then be postponed to the end. But whether these are commenced fairly early or are prepared in the final weeks, the projects attempted should be closely limited. There should be no pressure for quantity production. The participants usually can work most effectively in groups, criticizing one another's ideas as their materials are shaped. Ideally many of the projects should be tried out in the classroom. In institutions where a university school is in session while the institute is going on, arrangements can sometimes be made to make such practical applications. In any event, each unit should be reported to the whole group and reviewed before it is given final form. There can be little doubt that the interest thus generated, and the critical attitude thus encouraged, will prove of genuine benefit to all those connected with the enterprise. Testing and appraisal are quite as important as inventing and planning.

The teachers who were invited to the 1963 Planning Institute sponsored by the Commission, and held at the University of Michigan for three weeks in August, made abundantly plain the need for meeting such specifications as those outlined above. They were, in general, dissatisfied with what the workshops had accomplished in 1962. After a review of many of the materials that had been produced, they concluded that few were of much practical value, largely because they were too ambitious, too often the hurried work of a teacher who had not defined for himself the situation in which they might profitably be used, and because they almost invariably lacked the refinement that might have resulted from criticism and testing. Though such judgments failed to take into account the growth that these exercises produced in the teachers who prepared them, by absolute standards they were not unduly harsh.

What are the conclusions to be drawn? The thesis developed in this paper is that the prime necessity for the profession is a rethinking of its purposes and potentials, that unless this thinking goes on actively within, patterns will be imposed from without, and that in order to make professional direction effective there must be a much larger degree of understanding and agreement among teachers of English than now exists. An illustration of some means by which such an understanding can be forwarded has been given through a review of the operations of workshops and follow-up programs in the teacher-training institutes organized by the Commission on English. In this part of the institute program university and high school teachers were brought together in efforts to make effective in the field what they had discussed in the classroom. The results were only partially successful, but the endeavor revealed opportunities that can be exploited as part of an enlarging effort to give unity, coherence, and emphasis to the study of English.

Linguistics in the English Institutes

H. A. Gleason Jr.

American education is in the opening phase of a massive series of changes. Change, in itself, is nothing new, of course. But today it is becoming increasingly evident that the next decade will bring changes totally unprecedented in depth, breadth, and rapidity. It is this new dimension of change that must be faced. Traditionally, the schools have endeavored to control the rate of change to what could safely be managed with the resources and personnel available at the time. In this way the transitions have been orderly, and effective continuity of function has been maintained. This strategy, however, is no longer open to them. The demands for change are too great. Either the schools must expect chaos, or their capacity for change must be increased, immediately and drastically, over a broad front.

The impact of change is widely distributed throughout the educational system, but it falls with particular severity on the teachers. It is they who must bear the brunt of redirection of program, and it is they who must carry the burden of maintaining effectiveness and continuity through the turmoil. The quickening pace of change will certainly impose demands on the teachers that few are prepared to meet. One of the key measures must be to increase their capacity to accept changes and to make them effective. The English institutes are a significant device for preparing one segment of the teaching profession for a future of constant and accelerating change.

It would be one thing if the directions to be assumed by changes in the English curriculum could be foreseen. But no one has more than a very general idea as to the outcome. Therefore, the task is the difficult one of preparing English teachers for inevitable, but in detail unforeseeable, change. That is to say, teachers cannot be retrained for some specifiable new curriculum, but only for change itself. The perplexity that arises from this combination of urgency and inability to foresee the specific need imposes a heavy burden on the institutes.

It would be easy to reiterate the contributions that linguistics can make to a curriculum, but to do so would be to avoid the significant issue. The question is not so much what linguistics can contribute to a static situation as how it can help in producing the flexibility that will be needed in responding to rapid, deep, and unforeseeable change in the curriculum.

It should be remembered that the English institutes are part of a crash program, with all the limitations this may imply. One summer can be nothing more than a start. It cannot provide enough to equip a teacher fully, but all too often just enough to produce new frustrations and confusions. Ultimately there must be some much more massive retraining. But that cannot consist of institutes alone, or of sabbatical leaves for university study, or of any of the other institutionalized programs in operation or foreseeable. Indeed, it is doubtful that any feasible combination of all these can do the job, however important each of them may be. Much of the burden will have to be assumed by the teachers themselves in self-directed study and in classroom venturing with new—and therefore risky—materials. The best that can be done, perhaps, is to arouse, reawaken, or strengthen the desire for home study, to give the start that will make home study possible and profitable, and to see that at least the minimum of equipment is accessible.

In recent years it has been customary to organize the English curriculum under three heads: literature, composition, and language. The last is really a very recent phenomenon. Its antecedents were a number of elements seldom associated in any way, the most conspicuous being grammar and vocabulary training. Under the impulse of a variety of theoretical considerations and a large measure of desire to tidy things up, these have been gathered under one head. To the result have been added a number of new features, for example some consideration of English dialects, phonemic approaches to the sound system, and perhaps a bit of semantics. The whole has not yet been well-integrated in any school system, and many of the elements are not yet used at all in most schools. Thus the integration is a bit of unfinished business that must either be made effective or abandoned. In any case, seniority, reinforced by better and more numerous textbook treatments, gives centrality within the language segment to grammar. Indeed, for many teachers "language" is merely the new label for what was always "grammar," and the other elements are either marginal or unheard of.

Grammar has also been the center of the sharpest controversy. And it is a controversy in which linguists have often figured, though largely indirectly. The battle has generally been conducted by people whose roots are in English and who are only superficially acquainted with linguistics. The linguists have gotten into it, for the most part, only through being quoted, often out of context. The problem can best be clarified by looking at a formulation of the debate that was popular for a long time, "Traditional grammar or linguistics?" To set "linguistics" against "traditional grammar" in this way is to imply that it is simply another competing variety of grammar. This is a complete misunderstanding of linguistics. It seems to go back to careless reading of some of the writings of Charles C. Fries. Fries, himself, so far as I am aware, never used the word "linguistics" in this way. He did propose a new type of grammar, and he claimed that it was linguistically based. But that is very different from calling it "linguistics." The latter was the doing of people of far less understanding either of grammar or of linguistics. Later, when the term "linguistics" came to have some fad appeal, it was applied to all manner of things, many of them having no connection whatever with linguistics in any proper sense.

In any case, the question, "traditional grammar or linguistics?" does not present a choice, since the terms are not opposed. Rather, they are supplementary. Indeed, one possible option for the schools today might be labeled "traditional grammar *and* linguistics." There are many others, each of the form "grammar X *and* linguistics."

Perhaps a word is in order about "traditional grammar." By this term is usually meant what I would prefer to call "school grammar." It is a system of description of the English language that developed through a long and somewhat tortuous history coming to its peak at the beginning of this century. Unfortunately it has been rather static since. It is known to most teachers as the basic system in the overwhelming majority of American school textbooks of the present and recent past. It has come to be, quite undeservedly, the whipping boy of most "progressives," the antithesis of everything new, modern, or "linguistic."

School grammar might indeed be a reasonable option in an English curriculum, but with one proviso—one that applies equally to all other systems of grammar: that it must be taught responsibly. For the most part, it has not been so taught in recent years. There are two prominent respects in which recent teaching of grammar has failed. First, it has been fragmentary, presenting only disjecta membra, isolated facts. Individually these have been nearly meaningless—and necessarily so, since grammar is a system. Second, most of those who have guided English instruction—teachers, supervisors, textbook writers—have been deeply ignorant of the nature, objectives, and fundamental assumptions of the grammar they have taught. Rote facts taught by teachers who know them only as rote facts can seldom be of any value. Grammar has been demonstrably useless, maintained in the curriculum by tradition and irrational lay pressure. The fault lies not with grammar as such, not even with the kind of grammar, but with the shallow understanding of grammar that has pervaded the American school system from the classroom teacher upwards.

That being the case, there are only two honest options open. One is the complete abandonment of grammar instruction. This faces squarely up to the realities of the present situation, but at the same time closes off certain essential avenues to improvement, not only in other segments of the English curriculum but in other subjects as well. The other option is to upgrade the teaching of grammar by diffusing among teachers and their supporting staff some basic understandings of what grammar is, what it can do, what it cannot do, and particularly what are the strengths and limitations of the specific grammars current in the schools. To provide that kind of understanding is a primary task of linguistics. In this context linguistics is not so much a body of facts about some specific language as a set of principles underlying grammars. Indeed, one of the important activities of linguists is to examine critically the presuppositions of different kinds of grammars. Linguistics is, then, the necessary background for the effective teaching of any kind of grammar, be it a "modern grammar" or that long familiar in the schools. There are basic linguistic concepts that any teacher must have in order to teach school grammar effectively. They are very much the same as those needed to teach any other kind of grammar properly. They can be given piecemeal and disguised in some way. But they are most effective when given systematically and openly—that is, as a course in basic linguistic concepts.

The need for linguistic undergirding has been raised in connection with the kind of grammar that recent discussion has considered least compatible. Yet I believe school grammar *and* linguistics to be a live option, but school grammar *without* linguistics to be unworkable. This statement is not to be taken as an indication that all kinds of grammars are equally good or that the choice among them is of no consequence. There are numerous competing systems of grammar, and some are appreciably better than others. Choice is demanded. Some aspects of that choice can be made quite generally; others must be made with an eye to the specific purposes and the specific situation in which the grammar is to be used.

There is a great deal of argumentation in the professional literature of English teaching as to the merits of one system of grammar over another. These discussions bear an uncomfortable resemblance to the cheaper and less socially desirable kind of modern hard-sell advertising—absurd claims, ridiculous criteria, mention of mysterious ingredients all exclusive to one brand, the equivalent of the white-coated, test-tube-bearing gentleman who graces television screens with a voice oozing confidence: "Science says..." Too much of the whole business, both advocacy of the new and defense of the old, has been simply Madison Avenue at its dismal worst. The same set of factors that has produced this debasement in grammar-selling has produced it in detergents, automobiles, or household appliances. It is a compound of consumer ignorance, gadgetry, and the status value of innovation.

The choice of grammars is important. It should be made with care and knowledge. All sweeping claims should be brushed aside. The notion that something is good because it is "in" or "out," "old" or "new" should be given the derision it deserves. Teachers, English supervisors, and curriculum writers must learn how to find the real points of strength in any system of grammar or in any pedagogical formulation of grammar. Clearly, linguistics is called for. Grammars differ in the fundamental assumptions they make about language, the basic techniques of description they use, and the ways in which the system is marshalled. Very seldom do grammar textbooks make these differences evident to the reader. Particularly is this the case with school grammar. It is very difficult to find any systematic presentation of the grammar, and still more difficult to find any clear statement of the basic principles. The other systems of grammar on the market are little better in this regard. Americans tend to buy automobiles on the basis of upholstery, chrome trim, and the fashion of the day, and grammars on the basis of terminology, gimmicks, and fads. The wise car buyer reads the technical specifications and raises the hood to examine the engine. Teachers should know how to make comparable investigations of grammars.

Perhaps the choice of grammars will not be in the hands of classroom teachers. Still they will need to know how different systems compare and interrelate. Many schools will make new choices in grammars, sometimes only from one modification of a certain basic approach to another, sometimes from one system to another. Some changes will be very obvious but quite superficial; others will be subtle but very deep. Teachers will have to adjust to these changes as they come. They will have to understand their real nature and significance, and they will have to have a framework into which to fit the various systems. To learn old and new as parallel but unrelated phenomena will be too heavy a burden and can only produce confusion or superficiality.

Moreover, increased mobility is already a problem in many schools and spreading rapidly. Every teacher must be prepared to face students who have been taught some form of grammar other than that which he is teaching. He must be able to relate these forms in a way that will smooth the transition for the individual student. He must be able to answer questions in a way that will satisfy the asker without unduly confusing others. Interaction between grammatical approaches will be an everyday matter in an increasing number of classrooms.

The case for linguistics might rest with its value as background for grammar teaching, particularly as current ferment overturns the superficial stability of the recent past. But it is important to recognize that linguistics has something to offer with problems much wider than those of grammar teaching.

First, the movement, which has been going on for some years, to broaden one segment of the curriculum from grammar to a fuller and more balanced consideration of language must not be allowed to remain a change in terminology alone. The other aspects that have been suggested for inclusion must be given close examination, and, if they are found worthwhile, as many of them will be, they must be fully integrated. In the final analysis this integration must be achieved in the classroom under the guidance of classroom teachers. To effect this, the teacher must have the broadest possible view of language.

Second, the division of the curriculum into literature, composition, and language has come to be so taken for granted that the field of English is in danger of schism. If the unity is to be restored and strengthened, it must be on the basis of the most central concerns in each segment. In literature, for example, the probing must penetrate more deeply than has recently been customary in many schools. There must be less concentration on specific details of individual works and more on general principles. As a matter of fact, concern for principles is required not only to restore or strengthen the unity of English, but equally to maintain the health of literature teaching itself. Much the same thing applies to composition. With language, of course, it means moving the emphasis further toward the deeper generalizations that only linguistics can provide or undergird.

Third, the integration of the total curriculum must be strengthened. A curriculum as deeply divided as that of the recent past is no longer either feasible or desirable. At the research level there is already a very extensive traffic in ideas across the boundaries of disciplines. It is not that they are becoming indistinct or merging, but rather that they are realizing more and more the dependence of each one on the others. If the school curriculum is to prepare students for the intellectual life of the world in which they will live, it must take account of this movement and help them to see and appreciate these interdependencies. Already a measure of this broader perspective has been built into some of the science curriculums. English cannot afford to lag, and a good case might be made for insisting that English should, in fact, assume a place of leadership in exploring connections between disciplines. Linguistics, since it has important points of contact with several other school subjects, can be of immense importance in this endeavor.

Fourth, the liberal character of English must somehow be restored. Humanistic education has been a recurrent theme in the profession, but a great deal of the talk has been rather hollow. English is not as strong a force for intellectual liberation as its spokesmen have often claimed it to be. Certainly the teaching of grammar has been one of the most illiberal elements in the total curriculum. It has been taught as a set of meaningless rules to be memorized. They are not understood either by the teachers or the students. They are applied to unrealistic examples. The students recognize all this, of course. The saddest thing is that this kind of grammar instruction is attached to a part of the curriculum that claims to be the bulwark of the humanities. The result has been disastrous both for English and for the humanities as a whole. Unless liberal intellectual values can be brought into grammar to replace the anti-intellectualism rampant there today, English can never make real the claim that it has so long advanced.

The mistake has been to accept the long-standing American tradition that grammar is a closed body of knowledge. Every school graduate either knows it all or has forgotten more or less of it. Most, of course, have forgotten, but the school teacher differs from the general public in that he, presumably, has remembered it. Grammar is, in this view, a closed body of facts.

One basic assumption of the humanities is that there are no significant closed areas of knowledge. To accept the popular view is to deny one foundation on which the whole English curriculum is alleged to be based. It is essential, therefore, to establish that grammar is open, that there are new things to discover, and, in fact, that there are many things that can be discovered in a high school classroom. I would go further and say that the discovery of new facts about English grammar—that is, facts not covered in the textbooks and references available—is one of the experiences that every American high school student ought to have. No one should be considered competent to teach English grammar unless he has had the experience of dealing with problems along the outer edges of knowledge and unless he knows how to share some of that experience with his students. The latter is, incidentally, entirely feasible. Many teachers can at-test to this on the basis of what they have actually seen done in classrooms.

Faced with this situation, what is the role of the English institute? It must be a humble one, since there is a great deal more that needs to be done for teachers than is possible in any such brief program. Yet the institutes can have a very important part if they are planned to be part of a much larger process.

I have been impressed by the large number of English teachers who would like to know more about language. Their resolve will not always hold up when they discover what is involved, but at least there is a very widespread beginning of interest.

Unfortunately, for most teachers there is no immediate avenue by which they can satisfy their curiosity. In a few areas college or university evening courses are accessible, but the opportunities are really very limited. If a teacher wishes to study on his own, he still faces a shortage of facilities. Very few schools have available to teachers a professional library such as is needed for effective self-instruction. School systems have been very negligent, but they are not wholly culpable. It is, in fact, difficult to find the books that are needed. Those that are available are, for the most part, so removed from the point where the average teacher must begin that some transition is required before home study becomes effective or even possible.

The most valuable service the institutes can provide is to give teachers enough of a start—and enough bibliographic guidance—so that they can use the materials already available or soon to appear and can achieve something worthwhile through individual or group study at home or in their schools. Of course, it is equally important that more suitable materials be produced and that what is available become more widely accessible. These tasks fall on others—the second, in particular, on school boards, since the whole effort will fail if good professional libraries are not within reach of teachers. These collections must include a wider variety of books than the average teacher can reasonably provide for himself—among them reference works, textbooks, and a good selection of technical periodicals.

If this preparation for home study is seen as a prominent part of the task of the institutes, what sort of linguistics courses should they have? It seems quite obvious that the courses must deal with basic linguistic principles rather than some specific system of English grammar. Of course many facts of English structure must be discussed, but the emphasis must be deeper. The central aim of the courses should be to give some general insight into the nature of language and into the basis of grammatical analysis and the issues that separate different kinds of grammar. The specific facts about English are readily accessible to teachers who have the perspective to read with insight the available grammars. The general principles of linguistics are not accessible to most teachers through home study alone, unless they have the most remarkable persistence. So I would hope for courses in linguistics that are as basic as they can be. They do not have to be highly technical or indulge in exotic terminology. Nor need they be thorough introductions to the whole discipline from ablaut to zero morphemes. Instead they must concentrate on a few crucial fundamentals presented in a way that demonstrates their relevance to the central concerns of the English curriculum. And these courses must not be partisan. Too many linguistics courses have been little more than a hard sell for some specific grammar replete with its own bag of classroom tricks and terminology. Rather, they must survey basic isssues dispassionately, presenting both strengths and limitations of several systems.

A course built on this pattern will give an indispensable preparation for continuing study in linguistics. Difficulties will remain, of course, and the institute participants must never be led to expect otherwise. But the difficulties will not begin when they return to their schools and to their home study. The participants will be in the institute through the most crucial stage, where the problems are greatest and where the maximum of tact and patience is required.

I can bear personal testimony to this fact. I have probably taught introductory linguistics more times—at least 50—than any other person in this country. I have taught it to classes composed entirely of English teachers, anthropologists, theologians, prospective missionaries, or foreign language teachers, and to other classes representing almost every conceivable mixture of these and others. Different groups pose quite different problems. I enjoy teaching English teachers, but I know that they are by no means the easiest group to start in linguistics. Their difficulties arise from several sources.

Many English teachers are trained in university English departments, often almost exclusively devoted to literature. In too many of these departments the misunderstanding between academics and educators develops into an active antagonism to those parts of the English curriculum that are prominent in the schools but neglected in the universities. That means, of course, to composition and language study. Too, the methods of literary research and of linguistic study *seem* antithetic. Poor public relations on the part of many linguists has compounded the tension. These and other factors have produced in many English departments an antagonism to linguistics that is infectious, if generally covert. Even when exposed to the more balanced attitude of the schools and when earnestly desiring to learn something about language, teachers find it difficult to suppress this latent antilinguistic attitude. Tactless teaching on the part of an instructor in linguistics—and I recognize my failure here too—can easily cause the teachers to flare up.

Also, a linguistics course must necessarily deal with some rather basic concepts, some of them central to the teacher's subject matter. In doing so it exposes a teacher's ignorance at a most sensitive point, and the exposure is inevitably painful. With the deepest possible desire to learn, the teacher may still find it hard to avoid unintended defensiveness.

Moreover, teachers have been preconditioned to an emotional approach to matters of language. They have been indoctrinated rather heavily with old-fashioned attitudes toward grammar as an instrument to enforce correctness. Many of them are in rebellion against this prescriptivism, which as a result is by no means as strong among English teachers as it is in the general public. Unfortunately, the rebellion has been instigated and fed by a good deal of shallow propagandizing. A steady diet of advertising has trained many Americans to react emotionally to certain products rather than weigh their virtues dispassionately. This makes consumer education both urgently needed and markedly difficult. With regard to English grammar, teachers have been subjected to the same pressures with much the same results. It is a slow and difficult process for them to reorient their thinking to the point where they can avoid superficial fadism. Those who are hoping to help the teachers must avoid hard sell. The objective must not to be to convert teachers to the "right" linguistic doctrine, but to help them become rationally critical in their thinking about language and grammar.

I have mentioned three of the major sources of difficulty in teaching linguistics to English teachers. No one of these reflects any inherent incapacity or even any lack of willingness to learn. English teachers are not personally and individually responsible for them. They are the inevitable result of a system that has long viewed grammar illiberally. Retraining of teachers must be at a cost to the system that has produced the present impasse. Those who plan and teach the institutes are in the most exposed position and must in the first instance pay the penalty for generations of mistraining and shallow, anti-intellectual thinking throughout the school community and beyond it. It is largely in the linguistics courses that this reckoning must be made.

Consequently, the language portion of the institute curriculum presents very difficult problems, perhaps more difficult than in any other segment. The teachers are, generally, eager for what can be given them, but they also have built-in resistances that they are not always aware of and that are very hard for them to overcome. The maximum of tact and patience is called for.

It must be recognized, therefore, that there are severe limitations on what can be accomplished in one summer's institute. But the emphasis should be not so much on what can be accomplished as on what can be started. The success of an institute will depend, I believe, on how thoroughly it can focus on the really crucial matters, building new attitudes toward language and providing the tools for a critical approach to future study.

Grammar and Rhetoric

Francis Christensen

When the Commission on English held one of its regional meetings in Los Angeles, I had an opportunity to express my sense of the worth of what the Commission had accomplished. I said, tritely, I admit, that seldom had so many owed so much to so few as the teachers of English in this country owe to the members of the Commission. It is not easy to specify the "much." One thinks of the parallel work of the groups that have brought new order and vitality to school mathematics, physics, and biology. If I may use a mechanical analogy, the Basic Issues Conference left us teachers of English hung on dead center; the Commission has got us off dead center.

The Commission chose as one of its instruments the summer institute. In preparation for the 1962 institutes, it brought together in the summer of 1961 at the University of Michigan 20 teachers for each of the three courses it contemplated—courses in language, composition, and literature. The teachers of both language and literature were sufficiently of one mind to plan a course for their areas. But the teachers of composition could not compose their differences and so came to the end of the planning sessions with two courses. Professor Albert Kitzhaber, who had to give the public accounting of their deliberations, explained that one course emphasized the *writer,* the other the *content.* Professor John Gerber, who was chairman of the committee that evaluated the institutes and wrote the report that led to the National Defense Education Act institutes of this summer, said it was unfortunate that two courses had been projected—the two were complementary and ought to have been combined. This is a sound observation, but it does not go far enough. Even if the two courses were combined, we should still be far from a complete or rounded course in composition—especially one for teachers of English in the schools. Composing is a complicated set of operations and the teaching of composition is a complicated undertaking. If the teaching begins in earnest in the junior high school and continues through senior high school and into college—six or seven years—then many topics are going to come up other than the writer and the content. One that will certainly recur again and again and should and must take a large share of the time, especially in the earlier years of the work in composition, is the *medium*—the language, the words and sentences and paragraphs, what in the classical rhetoric was called elocution and what is now commonly called style. In writing this paper, I had to determine what stance I would take, and of course I had to have a content to present. (Without something judged worth saying I would not be writing this.) But I had no paper without putting down sentence after sentence in paragraph after paragraph.

My concern is to be with the medium and its due place, along with other aspects, in the course in composition for teachers of composition. In approaching this subject, I will have in mind the title the Commission gave to its final report, *Freedom and Discipline in English*. My thesis will be that the only true freedom for the writer is through discipline. In the teaching of composition, we have all too often had the extremes, of freedom without discipline, lest we rub the bloom off the tender creative soul; or of discipline as an end in itself—for the want of any other end. Of late we have perhaps had more of freedom than of discipline.

For example, I have heard it said that the only thing the teacher of composition can do with those he is expected to teach is to push them into the water and let them sink or swim. I have heard it said, too, that the only thing the teacher can hope to do is to inspire them—to get them all fired up and then stand aside to let the *furor poeticus* take over. I am sure that much of what passes for the teaching of composition assays out to little more than this. And I am sure that such statements of policy and practice could not be advanced in any but an English department. I cannot imagine a swimming coach holding his job if his only resource was to push his charges into the pool to sink or swim, or a football or track coach if his only stock in trade was to give them a pep talk and send them out onto the field to thrash about in the throes of the *furor athleticus*. To improve the analogy by coming nearer home, the teaching of practice in any of the arts—music, painting, ceramics, cinema, for example—proceeds in an orderly sequence, step by step, in stages designed to teach the student the materials and techniques of the art. It is easy to rationalize that teaching composition is different; it *is* different, of course, but not so different, not so much more complex and intricate, that innocence and ignorance are the best equipment for the teacher and spontaneous overflow the only condition for the student. C. E. Montague put forcefully the need for what he called workmanship.

"Surely one of the most delectable bees that ever buzzed in a bonnet is the old dream that in art the right thing to do is to do without workmanship. . . . To write, to paint, to sing — all with your soul alone and without the tainted assistance of any mere technical methods or formulae: it seems as if the nobleness of life were to do this; base is the slave who fritters away the auroral freshness of his genius on the coolie work of learning how to draw, or to scan or to practise scales."[1]

I take it that the Commission is concerned to help define a discipline for teaching composition.

One more preliminary matter calls for a place here. In the 1962 summer institutes, workshops were added to the three courses. They were added, largely, in order to provide an opportunity for teachers and participants to work out ways of coordinating and integrating the courses. Professor Gerber's committee reported no evidence of successful integration, and he wrote as if he thought that integration might be impossible—as if English were three subjects and not one. It seems to me that the failure to establish connections stems from the neglect, in the composition courses, of the medium. The integration, what is possible of it and as far as it goes, is at the level of the medium—that is, at the ground floor. Composition is the use of language, and literature is the compositions we think worth preserving. We must base our rhetoric of the sentence on the grammar of the sentence and bring it to bear on the reading, and even on the writing, of literature. It is a topsy-turvy world when the student who cannot distinguish between letters and sounds (between graphemes and phonemes) is set to writing about alliteration and assonance and when a student who cannot make out the syntax of the sentences of a poem is set to analyzing its imagery and metaphors and symbols and its avatars of myth. Literature is language; literature is compositions. The three are one at the level of the medium, where the discipline, if it is to be sequential and cumulative, must begin.

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[1] *A Writer's Notes on his Trade.* London: Penguin Books (Pelican A219), 1949, p. 149.

So much by way of preliminaries. There are three points I want to make about the kind of discipline that can lead to true freedom.

First, it must be positive, not negative. In the past we are trying to make a break with, the discipline was likely to be almost wholly negative. Freshman English became a "service course" dedicated to the proposition that the "errors" that had not stood in the way of the freshman's getting a high school diploma were certainly going to stand in the way of his getting a college sheepskin. If he made many errors on the entrance or placement tests, he was put into a "remedial" course; if he made only a respectable modicum of errors, he was put into the regular course; and if he made few or none, he was excused from the course altogether. If there were no errors to be corrected, why should he take the course? There is no need to try to drive this point home, but it is worth noting that a handbook which is still going strong was launched some 20 years ago by an advertising claim that it was based on an analysis of *the errors in 20,000 freshman themes.* We need textbooks that can be promoted as based on principles drawn from study of an equal amount of the work of the best professional writers. When such books begin to appear, English teaching will have turned the corner.

Maybe then we can admit that we are English teachers to the person in the next plane or train seat without inducing the inevitable spasm of self-consciousness that soon lapses into silence, all communication at an end. This mute testimony to the character of our influence should make us careful how we use our influence. In using it negatively—in concentrating on errors, on correctness—we have used it ill, if not for ill. These are harsh words, but until less than 10 years ago I felt like Robert Frost's hired man, who had reached the end of his working days with "nothing to look backward to with pride,/And nothing to look forward to with hope. . . ."

I am not sure that I can put the argument on this point in such a way as to convince those teachers, in both schools and colleges, who are wondering how, with so many new things to teach, they are to find time for the "fundamentals"—for *and* at the beginning and prepositions at the end and split infinitives and *due to* and *reason is . . . because* and for preserving *shall* and *may* and *whom* and *It is I* and *older than I* and all the rest of the dreary list. It will violate no confidence if I interject that the College Board examinations are rapidly being cleansed of many usage items that the Board's consultants consider to be established as standard English. The time will soon be here when we teachers can no longer use the dodge that we have to fight on this front because our students have to take the entrance and classification tests. When the time does come, we will have to learn to use our energies to prepare for what the examinations do test.

What lies back of our national mania for correctness, as Donald Lloyd called it, is simply this. We English teachers have mistaken our job. We have set ourselves up, or have allowed ourselves to be set up, as watchdogs or guardians of the language. not simply and directly as what we are paid for, as teachers of children. We are like the churchmen who put dogma before the cure of souls. And as linguistic watchdogs, as guardians of what we like to think of as the purity and integrity and expressiveness of the language, in laboring to preserve what we hear called a dying language, we have not only done a disservice to the children, our proper care, but I would venture to say also that we have done no service to the language.

To present the case of the children as against the language, I propose that you read two contrasting articles. One is by Mario Pei and appeared in the *Saturday Review* (November 14, 1964, pp. 82-84); the title is "A Loss for Words." The other could have been called, if the author, Martin Joos, had been thinking of the contrast, "A Loss for Children" or "A Loss for Humanity." Actually, its title, in the *Harvard Educational Review* (Spring 1964, pp. 203-210) and in Merriam-Webster's *Word Study* (December 1964) is "Language and the School Child." I know of no better description of what happens "When the artificial school treatment of usage impinges upon what the child already knows about personalities and society. . . ." I leave it to you to choose between the two conflicting points of view and assure you that, if you opt for the child, you need have no fears that the language will go to pot. A language, as Professor Albert C. Baugh neatly put it, has a way of taking care of itself.

I have intimated that our ministrations may have done as much harm as good. My thesis does not require me to prove this suspicion. I will only say that if a moratorium could be declared in the battle against the so-called errors, as Hugh Sykes Davies suggested in his BBC lectures, printed as *Grammar Without Tears*[2]—that is, if teachers and editors and Mario Pei and Dwight McDonald and Jacques Barzun would stop throwing their weight against, for example, conjunctive *like*—a large share of the condemned forms might very well prove their fitness by surviving. We would do well to accept the one-man, one-vote principle in language matters. It was no less subtle a student of language than Edward Sapir who asserted that "The uneducated folk that says 'Who did you see?' with no twinge of conscience has a more acute flair for the drift of the language than its students."[3]

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[2] New York: The John Day Company, 1953, 176 pp.

[3] *Language: An Introduction to the Study of Speech.* New York: Harcourt, Brace & Co., 1921 and 1949, p. 161.

The principle of one-man, one-vote prevailed from the beginnings of our language until the middle of the eighteenth century, and I doubt that—except for some unfinished business—there was much to complain about in the language that common usage turned over to the textbook merchants and schoolmasters at the inception of the school tradition.

My second point is that a sound discipline in composition must be based on a working knowledge of grammar. Grammar is to composition as a working knowledge of anatomy is to surgery. The relevance of grammar to the teaching and learning of writing is much disputed—but without much logic. I will take up only the negative of the issue here, leaving the positive to the last of my three points.

It is irrelevant that many professional writers know little formal grammar. The professional is not in the same situation as the student in the classroom. He has other motivations, other resources, and a lifetime to master his craft. It is equally irrelevant that many students who write well have little knowledge of formal grammar. Most such students have been from an early age voracious readers; they have learned to write by osmosis from reading literature. But, again, their situation is not the same as that of the student in the classroom. Osmosis is a slow process, and what can be absorbed from the amount that can be read in classroom courses, even over the years, is negligible. The teacher who argues that writing can be learned only by osmosis is arguing himself out of a job. He is also inviting questions that could be embarrassing about the writing of those who read literature the most; osmosis for the student ought to be osmosis for the professor. It is equally irrelevant that many students who have studied grammar and liked it and learned it well do not write well. One does not learn to write by osmosis from grammar any more than from reading. Grammar is not likely to have any bearing on writing unless there is a teacher or a textbook to bring it to bear. [We have brought it to bear mainly on errors, on what Edwin Roosa Clapp in an excellent article (*Saturday Review,* February 20, 1965, pp. 63-65+) called decency, not on competency.] It is irrelevant, even, that controlled experiments have shown no correlation between knowledge of grammar and ability to write. I have heard of no experiments where the grammar—either the kind used or the way it was used—could be expected to produce results. The problem is how to bring the grammar to bear and what grammar can best be brought to bear. If there is anything original in this paper it is in the solution proposed for this problem.

As to the kind of grammar, it must be modern grammar, whether structural or transformational, not the traditional school grammar. Looking at the language through the school grammar is like looking at newspaper pictures through a magnifying glass. Through the glass one sees dots, more or less clotted, but not the picture. Through the school grammar one sees details, more or less related to one another, but not the *system* of the language. It is coming to an understanding of the system, especially the layered structure of the language, that helps in the composition course.

The teaching of grammar should begin early, I believe, possibly well down in the grades, and it should be taught as interesting in itself, not as a means to any other end. I believe there is an error in tactics that may be called *the fallacy of premature practicality.* The first language learning should be play and the first writing should be self-expression. The child in the grades is in the stage of romance, as Alfred North Whitehead called it in talking about The Rhythm of Education. The discipline, it seems to me, should begin no earlier than in junior high school.

We do not yet have the textbooks for teaching grammar so early and over so long a stretch of time. The seeds for them are probably lurking in the materials produced by the curriculum development centers. But if we do not have them *in esse,* we have them *in posse.* It is now possible, as it was not 10 years ago, to plan texts for a gradually spiraling curriculum. The very nature of transformational grammar enforces a rational and cumulative sequence on the teaching of grammar. It is possible to spiral, not merely to repeat.

I must begin my third point negatively, too, but I promise to conclude on a positive note. My topic is how modern grammar can be brought to bear on teaching composition. I shall be describing what I call a generative rhetoric of the sentence and the paragraph. What I have to say is based on an inductive study of prose style that began years ago when I came to see that I could not teach composition by the principles in the handbooks and rhetorics then available. I have already published some of the results in a number of articles and in two units—on the sentence and on the paragraph—written for the Nebraska Curriculum Development Center.[4] Here I can only restate the basic principles.

In our affair with the medium, our aim is a mature style in the idiom of our own day. The stereotyped treatment of the sentence in our handbooks and workbooks is an impossible way to attain either result. As a grammatical unit the sentence, they tell us, may be either simple, compound, complex, or compound-complex. And they treat us, even some of the better ones, to a demonstration starting with a clutch of simple, primer-like sentences, going on to link them with conjunctions, and then—*and* sentences being scarcely more acceptable than simple ones—concluding by subordinating all but one of the simple sentences and, with the smirk of Little Jack Horner, holding up the result as a mature sentence. But equating grammatical complexity with intellectual maturity is a patent semantic fallacy. Naïve, childlike ideas may require "complex" sentences for their expression: I know who did (or done) it; the boy that took (or tooken) my ball ran away with it; I kicked him because he hit (or hitted) me. The nominal, adjectival, and adverbial clauses make these sentences complex, but they do not make them mature—they are well within the range of any normal 4-year-old child, whether his dialect is standard or substandard. They are not kernel sentences, of course; each has an embedded sentence. But even the most impassioned transformationalist would not rate them as the mature sentences of this paragraph even though, down to this sentence, they are the only complex ones; and I doubt that they would rate this sentence, with two or maybe three subordinate clauses, as more mature than the others of my own fashioning.

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[4] Six of these essays will be reprinted as *Notes Toward a New Rhetoric: Six Essays for Teachers* (Harper & Row, Publishers, 1967). The Nebraska units have been reprinted as *The Rhetoric of Short Units of the Composition,* available at The Modern Language Association, English Institute Materials Center, 4 Washington Place, New York, New York 10003.

The treatment of the sentence in our attenuated school rhetoric is equally fruitless. Here sentences are loose, balanced, or periodic. But we cannot recommend loose sentences any more than we can simple ones. When we trim the compound sentence to balance it, we limit its usefulness. And the attempt to recommend periodic sentences produces some of the worst perversions of style. They are not in keeping with the modern idiom, and even the textbooks that urge students to experiment with them add a note of caution. Thus we are left almost empty-handed.

We need a new concept of what makes for maturity of style in modern writing. We need a rhetoric that will not merely combine simple sentences into complex ones, making one sentence grow where several grew before, but a rhetoric that will help direct the student to new ideas. Not a rhetoric that wraps up ideas already at hand, but one that produces ideas. In short, what I have called a generative rhetoric.

My notion of a generative rhetoric calls for a profound shift in our notions about the sentence. It means downgrading that darling, the subordinate clause, and upgrading what I have called, after Paul Roberts, the sentence modifier. (There is some overlapping here; nonrestrictive relative and subordinate clauses are sentence modifiers.) Sentence modifiers are to be contrasted with word modifiers. They are set off by junctures in speech and punctuation in writing. Word modifiers are restrictive or, more simply, bound; sentence modifiers are nonrestrictive, or additive or descriptive or, more simply, free. The term *free modifiers* is not only simpler than *sentence modifiers;* it is more accurate, because many of them, as will be seen below, modify or are related to one another. Free modifiers may appear initially, medially, or finally. In the medial or final position they must be set off in order to be free rather than bound. In the initial position they need not be—their position, in front of any determiner or predeterminer, marks them as free modifiers.

The modifiers other than single-word modifiers thus set off are of several grammatical sorts:

1. Prepositional phrases. These are fairly frequent but relatively unimportant.
2. Nonrestrictive relative and subordinate clauses—nominal, adjectival, adverbial. These, too, are relatively frequent but not vastly important.
3. Clusters, or phrases as transformational grammar calls them—noun, verb, adjective, adverb. These consist of a noun, verb, adjective, or adverb plus its modifiers and any complements of the verb. From their position, they may be called appositive noun clusters, and so forth. They are frequent and extremely important.
4. Absolute phrases. These are verb clusters with subjects or, to put it in other ways, predications with nonfinite verbs or verbid clauses. They are one of the most important constructions of modern English and yet one of the least understood and most neglected.[5]

A good measure of the adequacy for rhetorical purposes of a handbook or workbook or grammar is its treatment of appositives and absolutes. Two books that came to my desk last semester dispose of both in a single page; a substantial grammar intended for college use that came just this summer does not even list the absolute in its index. We must have an adequate grammar in order to have an adequate rhetoric of the sentence.

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[5] See my article, "In Defense of the Absolute," *College English,* April 1950, pp. 401-403, and *The English Journal,* April 1950, pp. 221-223, and Chapter 14 of Baxter Hathaway, *Writing Mature Prose,* New York: Ronald, 1951, 244 pp.

The inductive study of prose style mentioned earlier led me to the conclusion that these free modifiers are the best index of maturity in modern English prose style and the elements we teachers can best spend our time teaching. Since these modifiers are free—that is, nonrestrictive, additive, descriptive—they can be used generatively. That is, they can be used, not to combine, but to add—to add the details, the comparisons, the definitions, the restatements, the examples that make it possible for the sophisticated writer to combine fullness with conciseness.

In two of the papers mentioned above I quoted from John Erskine his statement of a principle that he said was known to practitioners but that he had never seen discussed in print. The principle is this: "When you write, you make a point, not by subtracting as though you sharpened a pencil, but by adding." The meaning, he says, is not in the noun or the verb or the main clause, but in the modifiers added to them. The key principle of a generative rhetoric is that writing is a process of *addition.* (I am limiting myself, of course, to the free modifiers.) When you add a modifier to a head, the *direction of modification* (or *direction of movement)* may be either forward toward the head or backward toward the head. The reason why we must not make much of the periodic sentence is that in modern writing the direction of movement, especially in narrative-descriptive style, is overwhelmingly backward. (In an article on sentence openers I have dealt with the error of thinking it's what's up front that counts.) When you add a free modifier at the end of a base clause, this free modifier not only goes back over the idea of the base clause, but it goes back over it at a lower *level of generalization* or *level of abstraction.* The base clause is relatively abstract or general or it may be plural; the added element explicates or reinforces or sharpens by descending to the concrete or specific or particular. This flowing and ebbing movement (forward and backward) combined with this alternation between abstract and concrete (rising and descending) is perhaps the most important thing to learn in learning to write. It must be learned so well that its operation is automatic. The well-disciplined writer is one whose mind at the drop of a general or abstract or plural word or statement—a word or statement whose referent is known to him but not to his readers—automatically downshifts and backtracks and goes over the same ground, translating it into terms the reader will comprehend. Sentences in which writers do this are so frequent that I have had to find a new term for them—cumulative sentences. If a writer uses such free modifiers freely, his writing may be said to have a dense *texture*.

These four principles—of addition, direction of movement, levels of generalization, and density of texture—are the foundations of a generative rhetoric. They apply to the paragraph as well as to the sentence; most paragraphs are cumulative.

I have been talking at a high level of abstraction; it is time for examples. I will make what I call a structural analysis of a few sentences and paragraphs, using indention and numbers to exhibit the layered structure of these two forms. Symbols to mark the grammatical structure of the added free modifiers of sentences are PP, prepositional phrase; SC, subordinate clause, and RC, relative clause; NP, noun phrase, VP, verb phrase, and AP, adjective phrase (as used in transformational grammar, though I prefer *cluster*); A+A, adjective series; AB, absolute. A slant line marks the position of a medial element and also the element displaced from that position.

I have interspersed narrative and descriptive sentences and combinations of the two with expository sentences. They use the same structures; the difference, as will be shown later, is in the content.

The simplest sentences have only one free modifier added and thus have only two levels.

1. 1 Smith hung around for a minute or two, and then went out,
2 hitching his belt in the doorway to get his conceit back. (VP)
—Walter VanTilburg Clark

2. 1 Canby was behind his bar,
2 a tall, thin, take-your-time kind of man with seedy gray hair combed to cover a bald spot. (NP) —*Ibid.*

3. 1 The cushion of the barber's chair lowered with his weight,
2 breathing itself into firmness. (VP)

4. 1 In the beginning he [Kurt Vonnegut, Jr.] was thought to be simply a writer of science fiction,
2 a distinctly *déclassé* popular genre which no important literary person takes seriously. (NP) —Richard Schickel

It is common for the two-level sentence to have more than one element at the second level. These coordinate elements do not have to have the same grammatical structure.

5. 1 He plunged down through the crowd again,
2 his fat back bowed slightly in his loose clothes, (AB)
2 his thick neck rolling over his collar. (AB) —Katherine Anne Porter

6. 1 The lamplight, /, glinted as she turned a page with a flutter of slender muscles in her arms.
/2 bright on his boots (AP) and
/2 dull on the autumn-leaf yellow of her hair (AP)—F. Scott Fitzgerald

7. 1 He pulled out a chair and
   1 she sank into it,
     2 slowly, (Adv)
     2 leaning her head against the back, (VP)
     2 her arms falling along the side. (AB) —Katherine Mansfield

8. 1 And he, /, sat on there,
     /2 the murderer, (NP)
     /2 the black bird at the heart of life, (NP)
       2 glistening in the common light, (VP)
       2 formidable, unmoving, unperturbed, untouchable. (A+A)
     —Loren Eiseley

9. 1 Let the word go forth from this time and place, /, that the torch has been passed to a new generation of Americans—
     /2 to friend and foe alike (PP)
       2 born in this century, (VP)
       2 tempered by war, (VP)
       2 disciplined by a hard and bitter peace, (VP)
       2 proud of our ancient heritage. (AP) —John F. Kennedy

10. 1 Half the time we seem blissfully wedded to the modern scene,
      2 in love with its every mood, (PP)
      2 amused by its every joke, (VP or AP)
      2 imperturbable in the face of its threat, (AP)
      2 bent on enjoying it to the hilt. (AP)

1 The other half of the time we are the fusspot moralist,
  2 suspicious of all progress, (AP)
  2 resentful of change, (AP)
  2 determined to right wrongs, correct injustices, and save the world even if we have to blow it into pieces in the process. (AP) —E. B. White

In the last set of sentences (5 through 10), the added elements are coordinate with one another, and they all relate directly to the base clause. They are like the children of one mother. In the next (11 through 13), each successive one is related to the one immediately above it and is related to the base clause only by way of the intervening elements. They are like the several generations of a family. Sometimes, of course, as in the first of the set, it is hard to make this distinction.

11. 1 His [Addison's] ideal of prose is that of Dryden—
  2 a heightened reflection of good, cultured conversation, (NP)
    3 free at once of pedantry and of vulgarity. (AP) —H. J. C. Grierson

12. 1 From literal to figurative is one range that a word may take:
  2 from *foot* of a person to *foot* of a mountain, (PP)
    3 a substituted or metaphoric use. (NP)
1 From concrete to abstract is another range:
  2 from *foot* to *extremity,* (PP)
    3 stressing one of the abstract characteristics of foot, (VP)
      4 a contrast for which the terms *image* and *symbol* as distinguished from *concept* are also used. (NP) —Josephine Miles

13. 1 Rabbit sits down too and feels her rustle beside him,
  2 settling in, (VP)
    3 the way women do, (SC)
      4 fussily, (Adv)
        5 as if making a nest. (SC) —John Updike

The two-level and the multilevel sentence may be combined, as in the next set. The first example shows the free elements placed before the base clause. The last example is the first two stanzas of a poem; the slant lines mark the line divisions.

14. 2 In the following sentences, (PP)
    3 the first pair structurally simple, (AB)
    3 the second more complicated, (AB)
  1 it is again the appositive that is important. —Ann E. Nichols

15. 1 Boys stand on high bridges,
  2 chucking chips down wind (VP), or
  1 they stand on the shore of a pond,
  2 tossing rocks endlessly at a floating bottle, or at a dead cat, (VP)
    3 observing closely every detail of their experiment, (VP)
    3 trying to make every stone sail free of the pull of past experience. (VP) —E. B. White

16. 1 The thought of writing hangs over our mind like an ugly cloud,
  2 making us apprehensive and depressed, (VP)
    3 as before a summer storm, (SC or PP)

3 so that we begin the day by subsiding before breakfast, or by going away, (SC)
4 often to seedy and inconclusive destinations: (PP)
5 the nearest zoo, (NP) or
5 a branch post office to buy a few stamped envelopes. (NP)
—E. B. White

17. 1 In a shoebox stuffed in an old nylon stocking/Sleeps the baby mouse I found in the meadow,/
2 Where he trembled and shook beneath a stick/Till I caught him up by the tail and brought him in, (SC)
3 cradled in my hand,/ (VP)
3 a little quaker, (NP)
4 the whole body of him trembling, (AB)
3 His absurd whiskers sticking out like a cartoon mouse,/ (AB)
3 His feet like small leaves,/ (AB)
4 Little lizard feet,/ (NP)
4 Whitish and spread wide when he tried to struggle away,/ (AP & VP)
5 Wriggling like a minuscule puppy. (VP)
1 Now he's eaten his three kinds of cheese and drunk from his bottle-cap watering trough —/
2 So much he just lies in one corner,/ (NP)
3 His tail curled under him, (AB)
3 his belly big/As his head, (AB)
3 his bat-like ears/Twitching, (AB)
4 tilting toward the least sound.[6] (VP)—Theodore Roethke

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[6] From "The Meadow Mouse," copyright © 1963 by Beatrice Roethke as administratrix of the Estate of Theodore Roethke, from the book, *The Collected Poems of Theodore Roethke.* Reprinted by permission of Doubleday & Company, Inc.

The paragraphs of discursive writing are like cumulative sentences writ large. The topic sentence is like the base clause; the added sentences depend from it as the added free modifiers depend from the base clause. A paragraph is a sequence of structurally related sentences, structure here meaning coordinate or subordinate, whether in form or idea. The sequences are of three kinds: simple coordinate sequences, like two-level sentences—1 2 2 2 2; simple subordinate sequences—1 2 3 4 5; and mixed sequences, a combination of the other two—taking such forms as 1 2 3 4 2 3 3 2 3 4 5 or 1 2 3 4 4 4. In contemporary writing the topic sentence, the one which the others depend from, which they are a comment on, nearly always comes first. But some paragraphs, always coordinate sequences, simple or mixed, have no topic sentence; the topic is usually indicated in the preceding paragraph. And some paragraphs have extra-sequential sentences—at the beginning (transitional or introductory), at the end (transitional or conclusion or simply a coda), and sometimes within (parenthetical). Paragraph indention is often illogical in the sense that it breaks up sequences. Sometimes two or more sequences are combined into compound paragraphs.

The same set of principles—addition, direction of movement, levels of generality, and density of texture—is applicable to both sentence and paragraph.

The five paragraphs below illustrate most of these features of the paragraph. In analyzing the structure of a paragraph, one asks of each sentence, beginning at about the third, whether it is coordinate with *any* sentence above it. If it is not, it presumably is subordinate to—that is, it is a comment on—the sentence, or series of sentences, *immediately above* it. If it is neither, the paragraph has begun to drift.

A. Simple coordinate sequence—with conclusion

1 According to this pastiche of epistemology, then, abstraction and concretion may operate in four different orders of perception.
  2 The first order is static, a comparison and contrast of things only, without regard to how long they last or what they become.
  2 The second order is temporal, an extension of things (and especially people) to the events that grow out of them.
  2 The third order is mimetic, a direct concern with the conversational exchanges between people.
  2 The fourth order is mental, an intimate consideration of the mind itself, how it operates, and what it thinks about.
C You may take a concrete or an abstract view of things, events, conversations, and thoughts.
  —Leo Rockas, *Modes of Rhetoric,* pp. 4-5

B. Simple coordinate sequence—no topic sentence, no level 1

  2 In pronunciation the informal style is easy, relaxed;
    it admits a degree of slurring and ellipsis, though not to the point of becoming unclear.
  2 It makes fuller use of voice qualifiers (indicating emotional attitudes) than does formal style;
    it is therefore far more personal.
  2 In grammar it is less conservative, reflecting contemporary tendencies in the development of the language.
  2 In sentence form it is less complex and varied, and in vocabulary less discriminating, than is formal style:
    it experiments with neologisms, slang, and the livelier words of current vogue.

2 It is given to abbreviation and contraction.
2 In overall structure it is likely to be casual, not closely knit, additive rather than integral.
—Frederic G. Cassidy, *Standard College Dictionary,* p. xxiii

C. Simple subordinate sequence—with conclusion

1 But Caxton's spelling is still not as rigorously standardized as that of today.
  2 He is free to spell *book* alternatively with or without a final *-e,* and the plural appears once as *bokes* and once as *bookes.*
    3 The latter point raises the question as to whether the plural ending still had syllabic value for Caxton, or whether it had been reduced to /s/ or /z/ except after sibilants, as in present-day English.
      4 Spellings like *clerkes, actes, thynges,* and *monumentis* seem to indicate a distinct syllable, but
      passions, maters, and *condicions* argue for a non-syllabic ending.
C It is probable that his usage was about the same as ours, and that the *-es* and *-is* spellings are conventional survivals from a time when the ending was pronounced as a separate syllable.
—W. Nelson Francis, *The English Language: An Introduction,* p. 105

D. Mixed coordinate sequence

1 These three types of linguistic variety—regional, social, and functional—are characteristic of all languages, though in general the more widespread the distribution of a language and the more complex the society which it serves, the greater is the variety.

2 Regional variety is the inevitable consequence of the use of a language by geographically separated communities differing in natural and perhaps social environment and not in close intercommunication.

2 Social variety is characteristic of any society where there are class differences marked by economic, political, educational, or occupational contrasts—which in effect means any normal society, in contrast to artificially maintained homogeneous groups living in circumscribed communities, like cloistered monks or the Amish of Pennsylvania.

2 Functional variety is harder to assign to specific natural causes;
it is apparently associated with the human habit of setting apart certain types of activity from others and marking the separation by outward signs such as costume, etiquette, and ritual.

  3 Even the most primitive societies customarily have special kinds of costume, behavior, and language for religious occasions and often for political occasions.

    4 In its extreme form, functional variety may extend even to the use of an entirely different language for certain especially marked functions, as in the use of Latin on college diplomas and —until recently, at any rate—in the Roman Catholic ritual of the Mass.

    —*Ibid.*, pp. 222-23

E. Mixed coordinate sequence—with transition and conclusion

T1 Because of its nationwide use, network English is an acceptable standard form everywhere.

T2 But it is not a prestige dialect.

1 Educated speakers in Boston, New York, Philadelphia, Richmond, Charleston, Atlanta, or New Orleans use the dialects of their own regions in educated form.

2 The last five Presidents of the United States are a good example of the diversity of pronunciation to be found in standard English.

3 President Johnson speaks the educated South Midland speech of Texas.

3 President Kennedy's Boston speech, with its lack of postvocalic /r/ and its intrusive /r/ at the end of words like *Cuba,* was very distinctive.

3 President Eisenhower's speech was a good illustration of the Middle Western variety sometimes called General American.

4 It betrayed his Kansas origin in spite of a military career that took him to many parts of the English-speaking world.

3 President Truman retained many of the South Midland features of his native Missouri, and
President Roosevelt spoke the educated version of New York City speech, somewhat modified by his Harvard education and New England connections.

C Although most of these men had long careers in politics and frequently addressed nationwide audiences, each of them used the educated version of his native regional dialect.

—*Ibid.,* p. 247

In the study of free modifiers I have referred to, I included 10 each of writers of fiction and nonfiction. A question I might be expected to have an answer for is how the styles of these two modes differ. In the total number of free modifiers added, the 2,000 sentence samples were almost identical—1,545 in the fiction and 1,519 in the nonfiction—roughly, if they were evenly distributed, one in three sentences out of four. As to position they differed in an interesting way:

Fiction	initial 404	medial 329	final 812
Nonfiction	initial 575	medial 492	final 452

As to some of the grammatical kinds used in the final position, they also differed in an interesting way:

Fiction	noun phrases 131	verb phrases 218	absolutes 108
Nonfiction	noun phrases 123	verb phrases 63	absolutes 9

If these averages are of any worth, some writers of nonfiction, Rachel Carson in *The Sea Around Us,* for example, use a style more like that of fiction in general than some writers of fiction do, Mary McCarthy, for example, in *A Charmed Life;* and it has been reported to me that a study of fiction and nonfiction by the same writer showed little difference. This is not surprising, but it would not be true of all writers who use both modes.

These are rather crude measures, however, because what we term fiction and nonfiction are both mixed bags of goods. Very little fiction is purely representational; most of it has a large infusion of the discursive. A good deal of discursive writing is purely discursive; but much writing discursive in purpose has a large infusion of the representational. In making these statements I am assuming that it is the aim of representational writing to *picture:* description pictures *appearance;* narration pictures *behavior.* Discursive writing, on the other hand, *talks about.* By these distinctions, a single sentence may include all three, and many writers of novels and stories talk about their characters and what they do instead of picturing them.

This contrast between the two modes of writing leads me to my final subtopic. So far, I have presented what may be called a structural analysis of the sentence. The analysis is based on the grammatical structure; essentially it is an application of immediate constituent analysis. It shows what goes with what, thus laying open for inspection the structural layers of the sentence. (Any reader has to make such an analysis as he reads.) But my purpose is not simply analysis; it is to chart the way for a sequential and cumulative discipline for gaining mastery of the medium. Although a writer has to have an almost automatic control of the structures, he does not write to fill out structures. So I turn to the *meanings* for which the structures are the vehicle. In one of the articles mentioned above, "A Lesson from Hemingway," I analyzed the meanings as well as the grammatical character of the free modifiers of the story "The Undefeated." In representational writing—that is, in writing picturing appearance (description) or picturing behavior (narration)—when you add a free modifier to the base clause, just what can you add to sharpen the picture? I believe that what you can add falls into only three sorts: you can add a qualification (an adjective or adverb), thus making an overall modification of the image suggested by the head; you can add a detail, pointing out some part of the whole or an attendant circumstance; or you can add a comparison, going outside the object or action named by the head and likening it to something else. In the following sentence, all three are used:

1 He dipped his hands in the bichloride solution and shook them,
  2 a quick shake, (NP, qualification)
    3 fingers down, (AB, detail)
      4 like the fingers of a pianist above the keys. (PP, comparison)
        —Sinclair Lewis

I called these three things you can do to sharpen the picture of an object or action the *methods of description.* It might have been better to call them *methods of development or support,* because they are exactly parallel to the so-called methods of *paragraph development or support.* These methods of paragraph development are grossly misunderstood. They have no particular relevance to the paragraph. They are simply methods of development or support. They are the channels our thoughts flow in when we talk about whatever it is we talk about. They are used to develop the sentence just as definitely as to develop the paragraph. That is, their vehicle may be the free modifiers added to the base clause or it may be the sentences added to the topic sentence. Sometimes a change in punctuation will shift from one to the other. In this sense, the paragraph is simply a macrosentence or a metasentence.

How many such methods of development or support there are for us to call on when we talk about a topic I do not know. This is an almost untilled field of rhetorical theory. We need a modern set of topics to replace the Aristotelian. I suspect that Professor Kenneth Pike has a head start over anyone else in plotting what operations the computer that is our brain can perform. I do know that our textbooks are as inadequate in their listing of methods of paragraph development as in understanding how the methods are used. A brief working list would include at least these: explication, identification, specification, qualification, division and classification, definition, authentication, and statements of causes, effects, and reasons.

In working out a sequential and cumulative—that is, a spiraling—curriculum, one covering up to six years, the schools must start, it seems to me, with narration, the kind of writing children are already familiar with in both reading and writing. There are several reasons for starting here. One is that narration is much simpler than discursive writing. It is simpler because there are only three methods of development, in contrast to the uncounted number used in discursive writing. Another is that the material itself is simpler and more readily understood. It is simpler and more readily understood because it is concrete, the tangible reality of the child's own experience. Another is that it is not already verbalized; it is, or should be, immediate sensory impressions, what the child in preparation for the writing can see and handle, what he can hear and taste and smell.

Aldous Huxley thought that in the schools we should teach not only the school subjects, the solids and the electives, but teach the child to see—simply that, to see. And I should like to plead that seeing is far more important. To learn to see, not to recognize and attach the customary verbal symbols to, but to see intimately and in loving detail. I will quote John

Ruskin on this point, though he is speaking of the man rather than the child.

"So, then, we have the three ranks: the man who perceives rightly, because he does not feel, and to whom the primrose is very accurately the primrose, because he does not love it. Then, secondly, the man who perceives wrongly, because he feels, and to whom the primrose is anything else than a primrose: a star, or a sun, or a fairy's shield, or a forsaken maiden. And then, lastly, there is the man who perceives rightly in spite of his feelings, and to whom the primrose is forever nothing else than itself—a little flower, apprehended in the very plain and leafy fact of it, whatever and how many soever the associations and passions may be that crowd around it."[7]

"The plain and leafy fact"—how are we to get to that, any of us, in our lives as well as in our writing? Words are barriers to it. Whether very general like *flower* or only less general like *primrose,* words are collective terms, stereotypes, and we have to break through, or surmount, or get round the barrier of words to get to the plain and leafy fact of the thing itself. In a world awash with words it is a prime duty of the teacher to help his students keep in touch with things. In the composition course, paradoxically, and in all the kinds of writing we do there, we have to use words to defeat words. If as a teacher you patiently but firmly urge the student on to a second level—on to a qualification or, far more valuable, to a detail or attendant circumstance—you trap the child into seeing. If you content yourself with nothing less than his own immediate observation, you focus the eyes; you direct the attention. What the child learns to see, he learns to say, and vice versa. Thus both life and language are enriched and the barrier between the two is broken down. When you suggest that the added level may be a comparison, the primrose may at first be transmogrified into a star, or a sun, or a fairy's shield, or a forsaken maiden, but with patient persistence you may carry the child over from fancy, or fantasy, to imagination.

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[7] "Of the Pathetic Fallacy," *Modern Painters.* London: George Allen (Library Edition), 1903-1912, Part IV, Chapter 12.

The situation is much the same when you turn to the sentences and the paragraphs of discursive writing. But there are genuine differences. The material will be largely concepts rather than sense impressions; much of it thus will be already verbalized. The content of the added free modifiers in the sentence and the added sentences in the paragraph will be infinitely more varied. And the added elements will be added not so much for their own interest and the access they give to the thing itself, as for the sake of the reader, who must have them for the sake of the access they give to the writer's mind, since the referent of every word and every generalization is necessarily different in every mind.

I must confess that I have no idea how to go about devising a program for teaching the sentence in discursive writing. An assignment to write a two-level or a multilevel sentence narrating and describing is perfectly natural. The result may be a poem! But a one-sentence assignment talking about something is not; it smacks of the workbook. The natural unit of discursive writing is the paragraph. So I myself try to see that the four principles I have presented in representational writing carry over into discursive writing. The carry-over is commonly enough to transform what would otherwise be the thin, flat, faceless, pedestrian prose we often settle for into something that approaches maturity. The application of the same four principles to the paragraph assists the carry-over. As I have said, the difference between adding sentences and adding to the sentence is often only a matter of punctuation.

All this detail may seem complicated. It is complicated; language itself is complicated and learning to manipulate language is complicated. It ought not to be confusing, unless I have failed in my rhetorical task. But you cannot just hear, or just hear and read, and be ready for your classes. You have to get the *feel* by studying much writing and, above all, by practicing these principles yourself. If you can apply them in studying the writing of others and in doing your own, they will work in your classes.

The Potential in Potential Dropouts

Miriam B. Goldstein

Newton, long known as "the garden city of homes," has become part of the Massachusetts "inner belt." The schools reflect this change. A system long proud of its commitment to quality education for all is trying to keep its promise to an ever-growing number of deprived pupils. Thus, in facing problems common to all urban schools today, we teachers at Newton can avail ourselves of resources usually reserved for the privileged pupil. One example of this combination of "inner belt" problem and "garden city" solution is a new combined program some of us English teachers and history teachers have devised and are using at Newton High School. We have not had the help of National Defense Education Act funds or of summer institutes for teachers or of Project English syllabi. We have used our local resources to solve our particular problem. Ultimately, any program, with or without national help, must provide specific answers to the following questions: What characterizes the deprived pupil? How can today's English course help educate him? What must the teacher know and be to teach English to this pupil? At Newton we have found no ready answers. But we hope our tentative ones invite comparison with those found elsewhere.

In the program at Newton the word *potential* is far more important than the word *dropout;* the course of study is a humanistic one. But perhaps the best way to describe it is to start at the beginning.

In the summer of 1962, when, I believe, Commission on English institutes were retraining almost a thousand English teachers throughout the country, Newton decided something had to be done for its terminal students. They needed a course of study that made sense. What did we at Newton mean by making sense? On the negative side, it would reduce the dropouts, discipline problems, and chronic absenteeism. On the positive side, it would keep the pupil purposefully occupied in school until graduation. The administration offered some helpful suggestions: perhaps history and English teachers could work in pairs and teach the same class in sequential periods. Perhaps new content offering would help. The important thing was that when Edward Martin, the history teacher, and I were asked to design a course, we were freed completely from all previous curricular restrictions.

Even before we could take a careful look at the individuals we had to teach, we had to ask ourselves some big questions. How were we to provide worthwhile content for pupils who had known only failure in subjects like English and social studies? We had no illusions. How many people do teachers really educate under the best of circumstances? And if we were to try to undo the damage of a decade of failure in each child's school history, how much could the community afford to pay for what we would call compensatory or equal education?

Furthermore, the English part presented nagging questions to me. English is a tool subject. How could we make these pupils literate? English has its own intrinsic content. How could we make them informed? Moreover, the subject is undergoing change. How could we incorporate new learning into the program without alienating the traditionally trained teacher?

We had to answer these big questions, for only then would the course be useful for some time to come. It's much cheaper, when a family is planning a house, to provide, at least in the blueprint, for the upstairs bedrooms and extra bathroom it can't afford now but knows it will need before long. So we decided to build into our course the findings of current linguistic scholarship, though we knew our blueprint would be truly useful only when a scholar in residence had enabled all our English teachers to know what they were accepting or rejecting. Meanwhile, every teacher had to be free to choose what he would emphasize in language, literature, and composition. Each area had to be strong enough alone to justify the course; together, they had to create an urgency for the teacher to reexamine his current teaching. It is no accident that our teachers include four John Hay Fellows who have honors or College Board Advanced Placement classes.

If this course was to be ideal, it had to be based upon the real—upon what the teacher is and can become, but even more, upon what the pupil is and can become. Who are the potential dropouts in Newton? Generally, they come from the lowest socioeconomic group in the community. They know it and resent it. The more privileged are there every moment of the school day. The outs are always confronted with the ins; yet the outs have an apparent respect for their own class values: the hard work, the toughness. Their goals—money and a comfortable life—are rather uniform. They are committed to the status quo, to a conservatism that makes them cling to group values, though real gangs are rare, and to a religion devoid of understanding of what they have committed themselves to. They accept failure and try to get along with the police. To them, school is a rotten place, but they want to get a diploma if it doesn't involve too much trouble. Many are psychologically disturbed and have problems within the family and with the social group. Hence a certain pride in their alienation, in hanging around on street corners looking tough, skipping out to the delicatessen, and getting in trouble with teachers and cops. Although such pupils are not academic, they can handle complex ideas in the most unexpected forms. They have common sense as long as they are not emotionally involved. And they can be pushed to make each other very objective. They are capable of creative work in the widest sense of being able to approach, perceive, and manipulate materials with sensitivity. We shortchange these reluctant learners when we limit their ideas to the printed page.

I would like to introduce some of the individuals who justify these generalizations. Though each is atypical, he does help to characterize the group to whom the combined English-history course is being offered at Newton.

Fred is a tall, muscular boy with a violent temper. His father, a construction worker, disciplines him by beatings. Fred is unpredictable. One day his good sense of humor and quick mind brighten the class. Another day his eye begins to twitch; his controls are gone; he's ready to erupt. His school history has been a series of low grades and run-ins with authority.

Fred likes the new course. He returns to junior high to tell a teacher about it. Then the old problems reappear. He fails to get work in and has occasional blowups in class. He hits a teacher in the lunch room and puts a fist through a window. Still, he responds to his work sporadically, doing well enough to get an honors grade one term in history. Throughout the year Fred receives special counseling at the local psychiatric clinic. His guidance counselor and his housemaster see him regularly to keep him out of trouble. He makes it through the year and is to return in the fall.

Ralph is a bright boy who could do college preparatory work. Like most of the others in the class, he is addicted to the mass media, but he has a rare affinity for the best programs on TV and film. He has not been lulled into unconscious ignorance by stereotype and cliché. He is the boy who always has the thoughtful questions and answers. Verbal and perceptive, he responds to ideas. Ralph's alertness, sense of humor, and easygoing disposition brighten the class. He is slow writing tests, but his answers are good, sometimes profound. Ralph doesn't do his written homework; he doesn't exert himself to a point where he realizes his potential. Intellectually he excels and he is aware of it, but not in a condescending way. He sits next to Peter, Sicilian born, barely able to read and speak English, unable to write it, and having a history of failure in both Italian and American schools. Ralph helps Peter to understand assignments and class discussions. Toward the end of the year we try to encourage Ralph to go into a more difficult curriculum where he will encounter more challenging work and classmates. He refuses; he doesn't care. He doesn't even want to visit a class to see what it's like. He finally moves up a track, but he is deeply suspicious of this type of aspiration. He knows only too well the social implications of the track system in a suburban community.

Sally is disheveled, loud, and tough. Sally's parents are alcoholics, her younger brother has been classed as a juvenile delinquent, and she has been implicated in shoplifting. Sally does no work in school. She swears at her classmates and teachers and gets into fights. She is a constant troublemaker who is regularly thrown out of class and suspended from school. A social worker assigned by the court works with the family, but the reports are not encouraging. A "big sister" has not been able to reach Sally. A schoolmate who also has alcoholic parents is asked by the social worker to try to help. When Sally is again suspended, her parents withdraw her.

Mary is an Italian immigrant. She is gentle, pleasant, very well-groomed. She works hard but has difficulty in reading, writing, and speaking English. She is easily confused, has trouble following simple directions, and shows little depth in perception. The Division of Instruction provides a tutor to help her learn English as a second language. Still, progress comes very slowly. Toward the middle of the year Mary discovers boys. She also discovers and befriends some of the wilder girls. She talks more and flirts in class. Her homework comes in late or not at all. In class and out she pays less attention to her studies. She has to be coaxed and prodded to finish the year's work with an average grade.

I could go on. I'll conclude with Fred's girl friend, Jane, to round out the story a bit.

Jane is pretty, fragile, a quieting and stabilizing force in Fred's life. She faithfully puts up with his flirting with Frances and with his explosive temper. Jane is a capable student. Her work is conscientious and shows understanding. She seems to know exactly where she is and where she is going. She sits quietly in class, taking notes and listening, rarely volunteering information or taking part in discussions. For Jane, school is a place for only routine business. It is a job; if you do your work carefully and well, you are rewarded. Jane wants good grades (Bs). Once when she didn't work very hard and got a C, she was quite concerned. She soon pulled the grade up. But Jane knows not to work any harder than she has to.

These Janes and Freds are probably recognizable to most teachers. The important thing is that when we decided to offer a course of study to them, we knew we must avoid the errors that had somehow been made in their earlier education. We had to do something to relieve the sense of failure, the sense of futility, the hostility to the world which many teachers regard as a very good and pleasant world into which to move, the middle-class suburban world. So we decided to ignore the records and statistics in these pupils' folders. Instead we asked ourselves some more questions, questions we'd ask for any student.

Can he be objective?

Can he develop taste in art and literature?

How far can his critical thinking go?

How complicated an idea can he cope with?

Can he transfer an idea to new areas of study?

Can he achieve intellectual autonomy as a result of this transfer?

Can he move from a concern with himself to a concern with others?

Can he move from a concern with the immediate to a concern with the timeless?

Can he see when he is moving from private to universal concerns?

Does he value this kind of movement?

Can he develop introspection and perspective?

Can his imagination be aroused?

Can he transmute as well as transmit the culture?

These were the big questions, and we felt that if we were to adhere to our promise of equal education for every child in Newton, we had to keep asking them for the potential dropout as well as for the most gifted. But of course we had to concern ourselves with some very practical questions, too. For example:

What are the optimum time sequences for this pupil's work?

What uses of nonverbal material are most conducive to transmission of ideas?

What technical devices (maps, charts, slides, films, statistics) will be useful?

How can his reading and listening skills be sharpened? (Notice I did not say writing skills.)

Can he and should he study grammar?

What goals of expression, written and oral, seem reasonable?

What extra-classroom experiences are most conducive to a transmission of ideas?

What are the emotional and other psychological characteristics of this pupil?

Answers to both philosophical and practical questions implied a commitment to intellectual goals that vitally concerned pupil and teacher as human beings. Maybe there would be a reformulation of the pupil's self-image. Without it no intellectual or emotional growth could take place. Encouraging it meant hard work and honest reward for those pupils. They are too sophisticated to be duped into mistaking busy work for real achievement, though they will readily take the easiest way. The ultimate proof that a pupil had gained some self-confidence would come when he asked questions that enabled him to discover for himself where and how he not only fits into our society but can contribute to it. In order to ask these quesions, the pupil needs perspective, an enlargement of his immediate horizons.

Our questions and the questions we sought from these pupils presupposed, then, a humanistic curriculum with theme rather than chronology as the basis for each unit of study in a combined English and history program. The course first had to serve the needs of those battered human beings labeled potential dropouts.

We were determined that the first day we met these youngsters we would make quite clear to them exactly what the relationship would be. They know from the start that they are in a course being jointly taught by a history teacher and an English teacher. They know precisely what their obligations are. If they try, they cannot fail; if they do not try, failure is certain.

Rather than talk about what English will be like, rather than tell them what parts of their notebooks will be devoted to spelling or composition, I get right into the act with the Maizee game. I tell them about Maizee who is kind of queer, but she isn't crazy. She likes beets but she can't stand carrots. She loves spoons but she won't touch a fork. She loves Brookline; she keeps out of Newton. And so on. Of course we have to recapitulate on the board. As soon as they see the two columns in writing, the hands go up. They give some more examples of words Maizee likes and dislikes until everyone in the class is playing the game, showing that he perceives the underlying generalization.

And this, we say, is what English will be like. From here on, you're going to listen to your language as you never have before. You're going to observe it more sharply than you ever have before, and the only thing you have to do is make a hypothesis or generalization based upon that sharpness of observation and concern. This will be English for the next year.

And it does become English. These youngsters are getting a course based on the best in literature, art, history, and current linguistic scholarship, so far as Mr. Martin and I and the other teachers who come into the program can devise. But it's being offered through avenues that assure success. Many other teachers, for example, smile at what the mathematics teachers have been doing. It's so easy to sit on the sidelines and see third and fourth graders being teased into independent thinking or reasoning and emerging with very trivial generalizations that they might just as well have been told directly. And then we start rewriting our own courses, and we take that magic word "linguistics," and we say, "We will give these youngsters something in linguistics." But what shall we call independent thinking? And what shall we call significant ideas?

Here's how we've answered these questions. We've all heard that language has certain characteristics. And we've seen student films and texts that, in one way or another, say language is fundamentally an oral activity, conventional, symbolic, and acquired. But how to involve the students in these notions is another matter. In our classes, we start with stories like "The Far-Sighted Cat" by John Weaver and Peggy Wood, "The Wounded Cormorant" by Liam O'Flaherty, and Helen Keller's "Three Days To See." We observe the differences between animal and human behavior, particularly how each communicates. What is real in each story and what seems fake? These youngsters are very realistic. They can tell very quickly what is fake.

Then they start generalizing. A cat can't do this or that, but a human being can. How useful is such a generalization? Let's test it against the facts, because that's only a story. So the teacher brings a baby, a ball, and a dog into the classroom and lets the youngsters observe the actions of the baby and the dog. They note those things the infant can understand and say and those things the dog can understand and say. The pupils realize that their generalizing on the basis of the stories they read was a bit sloppy. Obviously, the dog is doing everything the baby can do. The dog uses his voice, understands symbolic language, and understands a reference to something in the other room that he cannot see. And the dog can acquire more language. So far the youngsters have made observations that usually take a chapter in a text. But the most important observation is still to come. When they have concluded that they see no significant difference between the dog's communication and the infant's communication—and they're perfectly right—we ask them to draw a big line on their paper.

"Now record the last sentence that you think this baby will be able to speak and understand five years from now, and record the last sentence that you think the dog will be able to understand five years from now." They reply that it is impossible. When that baby is five years old, there'll be no limit to what he can say and understand. They have then come to what is bedrock in current linguistic theorizing. What is this human capacity for creating an infinite number of sentences from finite sets of rules that we intuitively acquire? This is a pretty sophisticated concept, and it sets some ambitious goals for the year's work.

Then the next question comes. Do these concepts simply frustrate and bewilder these kids? Is it frightening to be told that the biggest questions are the ones that we are far from being able to answer? Can such pupils, in other words, *take* a truly humanistic course of study? Or shall we spend a lot of time in the classroom on other things? Maybe we ought to go back to a little bit of spelling, a little bit of usage, which these youngsters call English. Maybe. We think not, and we are not going back.

We continue to look into the nature of language throughout the first unit, which takes about six weeks, while the history teacher is leading the same kind of Socratic reasoning in his subject. The pupils note, as they observe the baby and the dog, that man can *become,* for better or worse; that an animal *is.* Both classes are looking at man as a creature with potential. In history they study man as an inventor of tools. In English they are meanwhile studying man as an inventor of language.

They see a film, *The Hunters,* recording very vividly but simply the way of life of a primitive people in Africa. Again they are asked to observe very carefully just what this society has evolved, what a hunter has to know, what he has to do. The history teacher's concern is: how does man control his environment, and as he gains physical control of it, what new problems are introduced with every advance? In *The Hunters,* the Bushmen speak a strange language. As the youngsters watch the film, they realize that although the Bushman may look at lot more primitive than they themselves do and although his tools are certainly a lot more primitive, his language is in every way as sophisticated as theirs. The Bushman uses every device that any other human being using language avails himself of—commands, questions, and so forth—if language is to serve as communication for this tribe. Careful observation of detail has led these pupils to another significant generalization.

There are more to come. The youngsters say, "But there is a difference. We write. We have books. These people can just talk." We ask the youngsters then to consider what the hunters could do better if they knew how to write. Is there anything in this hunting society that requires writing? They see that the invention of writing is intimately connected with a community's geographical, social, and even economic life. It's very easy, then, for our youngsters as they move along in history to discover why writing should have originated with river-valley cultures where record keeping and farming required some sort of improvement on the memory.

As the youngsters observe the difference between speech and writing, they are also observing some of the characteristic sounds of their own language. Meanwhile we are still doing what we were doing the very first day. Since many early written records have been handed down in hypotheses, which are called myths, they read myths about the creation of the earth and compare them. They hypothesize from them. What must each group have been like? What were their values? What did the word *God* mean to them? What did excellence mean to them? In confronting such questions, our youngsters are constantly being involved in ideas that any card-carrying member of the human race has a right to be involved in—not in baby talk. When they read myths, many of them will say, "Oh, we had mythology in junior high." Of course, but the second time they are finding out something about man as a thinking creature from the myths' underlying assumptions or hypotheses. Why is the creation story of the Egyptians so different from the creation story of the Hebrews? Why does the epic of Gilgamesh tell the flood story so differently from Noah's version?

Of course, the great books are coming into this course. For in addition to the best in language study, our youngsters are given the best in literature. We do not stop and say, "Can they read it?" If they can't, we will read it with them and to them. And we will use all the visual aids we need. We will not assume that ideas can be communicated only by the printed page, surely not in this age of mass communication. Not when we think of previous ages, where profound ideas were debated by people many of whom were illiterate, too.

I've tried to illustrate a little bit of what goes on in this first unit when the youngsters become involved with the nature of language and the nature of hypothesizing. I'll use just one more example from the same unit to show how the hypothesizing and the investigation on their part coalesce in their writing.

The history teacher asks the pupils to make a tool; the only artificial device allowed is string or rope. And they bring in some pretty lethal instruments. But it doesn't stop there. They have to explain the tool. As a pupil describes his tool to the class, someone will say, "Big? What do you mean big? How many inches? How many feet?" They insist upon the accuracy of description, and similarly, in guessing what the tool might be used for, they support their generalizations with evidence, with reasons.

While they're making and talking about tools, they are experimenting in the same way with language. I ask them, "Can you invent a language?" Many already have their own dialects and their own secret languages. How do they make their code work? They manipulate various parts of the English sentence, without any reference to grammar whatsoever, varying one element at a time. They see, then, some of the surface structure of a sentence. They experiment with writing and devise hieroglyphics. They find, for example, that it's easy enough to draw a picture of something like, "The bird is in the tree," but difficult to depict, "I think I see a bird in the tree." Thus the need to move from pictogram to ideogram to some kind of syllabic or alphabetic system of writing becomes clear to them. In other words, all of this is presented in a reasonable way that asks them to think through what they are observing.

The same thing is true in history, where they are exposed to archeology. They read about a Stone Age man who seems to have been killed in some sort of landslide; he has buck teeth and one arm. The archeologist concludes that the man was probably attacked by a bear, had to have his arm amputated, and thereafter used his teeth and one arm to make tools for the tribe. The teacher asks for reactions to this hypothesis and receives countertheories. "Maybe his arm was cut off when he was caught in the landslide." "Then where is that arm?" "Maybe he lost it in a battle." In other words, the pupils are never encouraged to make or accept a quick, random guess. They weigh their hypotheses very carefully all the way through.

Similarly they create explanatory myths: why the leaves turn red, for example, or why someone caught a cold last weekend. They have to footnote them with a scientific explanation, because a myth is only early man's attempt to order, understand, control his universe. This assignment is quite an eye-opener to them. When they start checking with their biology teacher, they find that there is no definitive explanation for why the leaves turn red and that modern chemists differ, even among themselves. They are becoming more aware of what hypothesizing really is in myth and in scientific theory.

In a later unit we try to get the youngsters to see what we mean by levels of usage. We do not say that expressions are right or wrong. We do, however, look at the nature of linguistic change and dialects. Again, not didactically and not through textbook analysis, but rather through the direct experience. For example, in the unit on man as part of a social group, when we read and act out G. B. Shaw's *Pygmalion,* they become involved with one particular dialect, one human being, and her efforts to become a lady by changing her speech. As a result they want to know: What is this dialect business? Why do people have dialects? Where do they come from? Why don't all Englishmen speak the same way? Why don't all Americans speak the same way?

So we look into the nature of dialects, hypothesize about how they arise, and see how they vary. The youngsters then have a much more positive attitude toward their own dialect. They realize that what we call "standard English," or "correct English," is simply the prestige dialect in any community. But they are no longer in terrible awe of it. They realize that acquiring another dialect may be a useful thing, but there's no compulsion about it. Such awareness is very good for them. We think it liberates a good deal of their expression and their communication with the outside world.

Our youngsters go on several field trips. They go to the museum in very small groups, and we encourage them to linger and ask questions. Very often an observation may not be forthcoming until much later. For example, we had been to the museum after their unit on the individual in society. They had read parts of *The Iliad* and had seen how a society shapes its heroes, molds its values, creates its rebels. In the museum the Greek vase paintings reinforced these ideas. Shortly after that, we were reading Steven Crane's *Maggie.* We were at the part where Maggie, with her desire to make something of herself, goes one Sunday to the art museum; and Pete, who is trying to make her, reluctantly goes along. "Look at all dese little jugs!" he cries. "Hundred jugs in a row! Ten rows in a case, an 'bout a t'ousand cases! What'd' blazes use is dem?" One boy in the back of the room observed, "Do you know what's the matter with Pete? He can't connect with them jugs." Such comments indicate that the course is taking effect. They show us that some of these youngsters are engaging in really thoughtful discourse with us. Our examinations are hard. I doubt that many college-bound youngsters could pass them. On the other hand, when we grade, we ignore errors in spelling, punctuation, and usage; we look only for communication of ideas.

The youngsters, then, develop a certain attitude toward the nature of language and a human being's relationship to language, toward linguistic change and what we mean by good and bad usage. Later in the year, when they are studying the Renaissance and the seventeenth-century intellectual revolution, we reach that part of the intellectual revolution that has given impetus to the most recent studies in language. They begin to study what I suppose could be labeled generative grammar. But it does not involve them in symbolic logic and algebra; these youngsters do not become involved in abstraction that is meaningless to them. However, they do try to discover what the human sentence-making mechanism is, not just by observing but by hypothesizing.

How do we form such a simple thing as a question, or how do we form negatives in English? I don't just mean where do we put the "not." I'm talking about what we know intuitively and do almost automatically. How do we account for this extraordinary phenomenon that characterizes the human species? It's this sort of thing that these youngsters get involved in. They devise rules and start testing sentences of their own creation to work out rules for converting a declarative sentence into a question. They are pitted not against a prescriptive grammar but against each other. When their rules seem cumbersome, they devise abbreviations. They ask to create symbols. They are constantly testing, feeding these rules to their classmates, who play the role of computers. A machine cannot do anything except what it is directed to do; similarly, those rules have to become more and more precise if they are to approximate not what the rules tell the pupils to do but what the pupils actually do with an English sentence.

We don't push them far, but again we have the feeling that these youngsters could take a much more thoughtful grammar test than many a youngster who has been studying traditional classroom grammar. So we think these kids are going far intellectually. How far remains to be seen.

On the other hand, these pupils didn't just have intellectual problems. They had very deep personal problems. The interesting thing is that as they taste of success and become involved in really significant ideas, a few begin to see themselves in a new light.

I wasn't aware of this really until something happened last spring. The history teacher had been making the transition from the age of craftsmanship into the age of automation. To help the youngsters see what a human being goes through when he has to live through such a change, we were reading a short story by John Galsworthy called "Quality." I asked them a question, "What do you think is bothering Mr. Gessler anyway?" They had been so sensitized to language that their first response was, "He can't get used to change. He can't adapt himself." I asked, "What evidence do you have of that?" "Well, there he is. He's been living in London all these years and he still speaks with a German accent." Kevin raised his hand and said, "Wait a minute. That's not such a problem really. We could line up all the phonemes of German for him and all the phonemes of English, and we could make him hear the differences." Then Sue, sitting down in front, asked, "Hey, isn't that the way kids learn to read, anyway?" I replied, "I don't know. We're talking about two languages here. But would you like to see how people learn to read?" Not only was there a general "Yes," but Sue picked it up immediately with, "If we could help Gessler, why can't we help those kids?"

As a result of this classroom activity, the students did visit an elementary school in Newton. The guidance counselor alerted them in advance to some of the things they might look for in children's learning how to read. They visited classrooms in very small groups. Some of them worked individually with the youngsters. When they came back, they wanted to write thank-you notes to the principal who had arranged for the visits. Some of them wrote their notes five times over. They wanted to impress the principal. They wanted to be sure that the letters were absolutely impeccable. When they needed to write correctly, they could. But they had to have a real audience. They had to have a real motive for writing. They not only thanked him but asked, "May we help the teachers?"

In September, if we can arrange it, these students who have had remedial reading for years and are still handicapped readers will sit down with a second or third grader and work on certain phonemic and graphemic correspondences with him. They will be mastering for the first time that which somehow eluded them. They will not just *get* remedial reading. They will get it in order to *give* something of their own selves, their own spirit, and their pride. The giving is far more important than learning the phonemic-graphemic correspondences.

The course I have described is expensive and hard to teach. The teachers have to be handpicked, and even some of those find that it's just too much. On the other hand, the community has cooperated in every way. A psychiatric social worker is being provided. The classes are being kept to a maximum of 20 students. Those youngsters who are too disturbed to take the classroom situation have a tutor to help them keep up with the work until they are ready to return to class. The schedule enables pupils to fulfill requirements for graduation by taking their first classes in the morning and being free in the afternoon to find jobs in the community or to get some kind of work experience for which they would be getting credit. We're not ignoring the needs of these youngsters, but we assume the English and the history teacher can best serve those needs through solid substance and palpable achievement in their own subjects. By combining these subjects we offer each student a consistent approach to learning. He has a double chance to master ideas in two classes dealing with the same reading and writing.

The big questions about the program are still unanswered. It is being developed very slowly and carefully in the junior and senior years. Biology, mathematics, and art teachers are trying to integrate their courses with the English and history courses. And we suspect that systematic follow-up after high school will still not provide all the answers. But to help a battered human being respect himself is a long, expensive, and necessary job. To try to educate these so-called "reluctant learners" will take a whole generation. We English teachers dare not choose between guidance and teaching, between content and method. Nor can we afford to ignore the possibilities of new language content in the English courses. That's why any of us who wish to teach English to the deprived need more and longer NDEA institutes and yearlong fellowships. We English teachers need to realize some of our own potential to help today's youth realize theirs.

All Students Hunger for Great Literature

Joan W. Wofford

What are those things that students are hungry for? It seems to me that students are hungry for exactly those things that teachers are hungry to teach. Of course, there may be teachers of English who honestly get enthusiastic year after year about underlining nouns once and verbs twice. But I doubt it. Rather I believe that most English teachers chose their profession because literature moved them. What will move their students is a demonstration by those teachers of their own hunger for the great uses of words. What will mean something to their students is to share in some of the techniques of reading that will enable them to be moved more often and more accurately, and to experiment with some of the techniques of writing that will enable them to move others more effectively.

What will *not* move students—and here I am speaking of so-called "deprived" or "disadvantaged" students—is a kind of double standard on the part of the teacher which says "great works of literature for me but usage for you." The students to whom I refer know too much about double standards. They live with them all the time. Of course, they may ask for straight grammar and usage; these are safe in that they demand a minimum of thought, the answers are supposedly neat and clear, and the students have been told—until they believe it—that to get ahead and hold a job they must speak "proper English," regardless of whether they have anything important to say.

My experience has shown that once students get into a great work of art and for the first time begin to see that words in a book can mean something to them, grammar and usage will be learned as tools in the business of communication, not as the end product of all English study.

What deprived students are hungry for is some sincerity, honesty, and enthusiasm in the teacher and in the work of art. The more disadvantaged the students are the more they demand these qualities. If a teacher can best be sincere, honest, and enthusiastic about great works of art, it follows that these are the works he must teach. And, of course, these are the works that will ring most true to these students as well as to their teachers.

I am not recommending that a terminal group of students be launched with a work their teacher became enthusiastic about only in graduate school. But without seriously altering his standards, it is possible for a teacher to be enthusiastic about a certain work for a certain group even if in another context he would not defend it as great literature. But I think it does have to be *good* literature. A book that comes to mind, because I have experienced success with it year after year with extremely deprived Negro students, is J. D. Salinger's *The Catcher in the Rye.* I am not sure I could defend this book as great literature, but I am sure it is good, and for these students I know it is "great." I use it to open up the year—and their eyes—to the implied idea that books may have something to say to them. The payoff comes when students see themselves in Holden Caulfield and tell me in one way or another what one boy put so well, "Man, there's three-quarters of my life in that book."

In addition to the need to avoid a double standard, there is another reason for teaching great works of literature. That of course is the student's need to experience those works. The more deprived the student the more he needs direct contact with the best that has been thought and written. In fact, it is my experience that extremely deprived students, those for whom the tenth grade may well be the end of formal education, are especially hungry for the really big questions of life and literature. Perhaps they know that they must examine these questions in a formal way now or never. Or, more likely, they have a kind of directness which sees the insignificance of most of what is taught. At any rate, the "slower" the class, the more eager I have found them for questions like "Why do good men suffer?" or "What is the good life?" These are questions most students only reach in a college philosophy class. On the basis of a few experiments, I am sure that a special course in philosophy is not beyond the abilities of deprived students, and ought to be included in the curriculum. I am sure that terminal students would delight in the pre-Socratic writers and in some works by Plato himself. And, of course, if youngsters can get involved in what they read, they can write, and write well. Even very deprived students whose usage may be atrocious can, when moved, use language colorfully and uninhibitedly and sometimes even with remarkable effect.

To be a little more concrete, let me list some of the books that we at Cardozo High School have found successful with students. Cardozo High School is a virtually all-Negro, comprehensive high school of more than 2,000 students which serves the inner city of Washington, D. C. The area has one of the highest crime rates in the city and contains a disproportionately high share of the city's welfare cases and broken homes. In brief, the Cardozo area bears all the marks of the deprived, inner-city ghetto. By 1962, a number of the teachers there had become increasingly depressed at the idea of teaching their students much besides manners, and a few had even given up doing that. Yet with these same students other teachers have recently been successfully teaching books in which the students have found meaning and therefore excitement. I have mentioned *The Catcher in the Rye;* other works dealing with adolescence also offer a good way for students to discover books. Some of these are John Knowles' *A Separate Peace,* Richard Wright's *Black Boy,* Alan Sillitoe's *Loneliness of the Long Distance Runner,* and the play version of *The Diary of Anne Frank.* For Negroes, books by or about Negroes are often very meaningful, although they may pose problems for some white teachers, and many of them prove too difficult or unsuitable for high school students (like much of the writing of James Baldwin and Ralph Ellison). But works like *To Kill a Mockingbird,* by Harper Lee, or *Cry, The Beloved Country,* by Alan Paton, offer an introduction to some of the same themes, yet are not quite so loaded for the teacher.

On the other hand, different teachers have had very different experiences teaching a book like *Black Boy* to an all-Negro class. Some young white teachers found it an immediate success. Students who had never completed a book in their lives would return to class the next day having finished the book completely, and others would beg for class time in which to finish because commotion at home had prevented their reading. These were very new experiences for both teachers and students, and testimony to the importance of giving youngsters books that speak directly to them. However, *Black Boy* is the work of an embittered man, full of self-hatred, who views his youth through the distortions of the years and is unable to show the reader any really healthy relationship with another human being. *Black Boy,* therefore, does present problems. It needs the help of a sensitive teacher who, with a few good questions, can put Wright's experience into some sort of perspective for his students.

The overwhelming response of the students does indicate their starvation for books containing experiences with which they can identify. Unfortunately, there are not many such works available and suitable. Ellison's *Invisible Man* is simply too difficult for most average high school students. Baldwin's essays prove provocative and meaningful for those who can read them, probably honors students. His novels might prove distasteful to some teachers and parents. Lorraine Hansberry's *A Raisin in the Sun* is often very successful, particularly with slower classes who have no trouble reading it. However, some teachers have detected student resentment at the dialogue; the youngsters felt they should be given "good English," not, as they muttered, "Nigger talk." In other words, the topic of Negro literature for Negro students is touchy and complex but one that should probably be tackled.

Once the students can see the relevance of one or two books to their lives (through the selection of a special area of interest like race or adolescence), they are usually ready to trust the teacher and his choice of a new book. At that point most good or great literature that the teacher is hungry to teach will work well. It doesn't matter whether it is Shakespeare, Greek literature, Chaucer, Shaw, or what. All these have been very successful with the students I have taught. Shakespeare's *Othello* and *Antony and Cleopatra* have proven intriguing. Greek literature in the form of *Oedipus the King, Antigone, Agamemnon, Hecuba, The Iliad, The Odyssey* has an immediacy that stuns twentieth century urban youth. Chaucer's *Troilus and Cressida* can be amusing to teenagers who recognize many parallels between Troilus' behavior with his gang of boys and that of the school football hero strutting around the cafeteria. And Shaw's *St. Joan,* though difficult, has stirred a tough group of tenth grade boys into some important insights into faith, integrity, and humanity's tendency to crucify its saints.

Moreover, I had success teaching a ninth grade Honors class a unit tracing the myth of Troy through Western literature. We began with *The Iliad* and ended with Auden's "The Shield of Achilles." The class read *The Iliad* in its entirety (the translation by W. H. D. Rouse), *The Odyssey,* Euripides' *The Trojan Women* and *Hecuba,* the second book of Vergil's *The Aeneid* (describing the burning of Troy), the first book of Chaucer's *Troilus and Cressida,* parts of Dante, Ovid, Shakespeare, Marlowe, and Thoreau dealing with the Greek heroes, Archibald MacLeish's radio play, *The Trojan Horse* (which looks at the fall of Troy from the perspective of America's dilemmas in 1952), and Yeats' "No Second Troy." Each time that we came to a new age's reinterpretation of the myth, we tried to see what had been changed or added and why. The students read the best translations I could find—all unabridged—and even did some comparative work on different translations: four versions of the same passage from *The Iliad,* for instance.

Aside from the students' excellent test papers on Yeats' "No Second Troy" and their enthusiasm over Heinrich Schliemann's archaeological discoveries at Troy (they read all of Leonard Cottrell's *The Bull of Minos* on their own), one measure of the unit's impact on their daily lives came when some of the girls stopped in after school to talk about their excitement and anxiety over the afternoon's championship basketball game. After telling me how they had prayed the previous night that their team would win, one girl said, "Yes, and I even threw in a prayer to Apollo, just to make sure." Clearly, the unit on Greece had made an impression.

There are really only two deterrents to the kind of excitement these books can arouse in deprived students. The first is the teacher who, for understandable reasons, does not believe in the potential of his students, and the second is the teacher who does not believe in the excitement of literature. The first results in the disastrous double standard whereby real literature is considered too good for street kids. The second results in a baby-sitting operation where the teacher goes through empty exercises to keep the students quiet, never realizing that a great piece of literature might help him achieve a more profound quiet. Too much high school teaching, particularly in deprived schools, is by teachers who long ago lost their enthusiasm for either their students or their books. Enthusiasm for both is vitally needed but difficult to instill once years of experience have taught teachers that books and students do not mix.

It was into such a situation at Cardozo High School that a group of returning Peace Corps volunteers was introduced. They had discovered abroad that they loved to teach but were disheartened upon their return by the length and dullness of what stood between them and teaching here, namely teacher certification requirements. Planners of the Cardozo project, too, were appalled at an educational system—with its obvious shortage of teachers in general and its desperate shortage of teachers eager to enter slum schools—which said to people who wanted to teach and who had been teaching among deprived people "No, you cannot enter a classroom unless you spend so many years obtaining so many credits."

To meet the needs of these young teachers and the needs of students at Cardozo, a program was built in which each returned Peace Corps volunteer taught two classes a day and tried to develop curriculum materials that would prove meaningful to his Cardozo students. While teaching and working on curriculum, the former volunteers were given a unique kind of day-to-day supervision by master teachers who were also teaching two classes a day. The interns, as they were called, also attended graduate seminars on education, sociology, and psychology taught at Cardozo and graduate courses in their subject fields at Howard University. In short, they were given the chance to earn an M.A.T. degree and certification while actually learning to teach in a challenging situation and while relating to their students in refreshingly different ways with teaching materials they felt might reach those youngsters.

What has been learned from this program about teaching and teacher training is pertinent, I think, to the plans for institutes under the National Defense Education Act. The ferment created by the Cardozo program has been due less to small teaching loads for the interns than to the fact that all the interns and staff share one office and are in constant discussion about the stuff of education: what works, what does not, and why. Each day's successes and failures are shared, often because the interns and staff observe each other and are observed—something that simply does not happen in a school once tenure has been granted. They meet in informal groups and seminars to criticize, evaluate, plan, and theorize. They also attend seminars on urban sociology and adolescent psychology—all taking place right in the high school. This process has produced some real excitement. It has also produced, in the past two years, 26 teachers all engaged today in some form of education, from training teachers for the Ministry of Education of the West Cameroons to teaching at Cardozo, as 7 graduates of the program are doing.

Thus it was discovered that one cure for poor schools and discouraged teachers was not only less work for the teacher, but more concentrated work in an atmosphere of shared excitement and experimentation. The daily lesson in the Cardozo classroom served as the testing ground for materials and methods. The needs of that classroom's students served as the crucible for the psychological and sociological theories emanating from the daily seminars. Such an intensive atmosphere, with its emphasis on observed performance, leads to important kinds of educational improvements and innovations.

And this discovery is pertinent because it constitutes an important missing dimension in the professional lives of teachers. All schools should be filled with the kinds of passionate discussions and arguments about teaching that filled Room 111 at Cardozo High School. Yet few schools are. Why should this be so? Student-teachers are expected to get excited. High school students are expected to get excited and to discuss their views. A teacher knows he has succeeded if he overhears a cafeteria conversation that revolves around the lesson he just taught. By that same standard, how would teachers' lunchroom conversations be judged? Usually we discuss anything but teaching. If this is a sign that we have stopped learning and now perform our duties mechanically, with a minimum of thought, it is time we started learning again—from each other. If, as is more likely the case, it is a sign that we find it simply too complicated, and perhaps threatening, to describe to a colleague what we are doing, it is time that we shared a greater knowledge of each other's classes, methods, and materials. In either case, we would benefit from some genuine exchanges of ideas and methods. But the exchange I mean is not the sort that takes place only at faculty and department meetings. It has to take place on the spot, where we work, in the same way that exchanges take place between surgeons who share their techniques by observing or even participating in operating room demonstrations of each other's methods.

For many of us the thought of a respected colleague's sitting through one of our lessons is terrifying. But the terror can be salutary. It can push us to develop a lesson plan equal to those we used to prepare when we expected a visit of a supervisor. It can remind us of the feelings of our students when they must daily expose themselves before their peers in our classrooms. It can also remind us of the way the greatest teachers—a Socrates or a Jesus—taught, out in the open, where all could see and listen and question.

Teachers selected by school systems to attend NDEA institutes are presumably selected because what they learn will not simply stop with them but will benefit others in their departments and schools. Yet even so, many teachers will find it frustratingly difficult to communicate their summer's experience except to close professional friends. Their contributions will probably be limited to a formal report to the department. Too frequently schools have not faced the problem of how to disseminate new insights and experience. To make his experience at the institute as meaningful to others as it should be, each teacher should take it upon himself to help his school develop a method to allow teachers within his department to learn more of what their colleagues are doing. As a first step, I suggest that teachers visit each other's classes and observe the performances of their colleagues. A systematic program of teacher observations takes planning and it takes time. Not only is it necessary for one teacher to have a free period, it is also necessary for that teacher first to have communicated with the instructor he intends to visit (to ascertain that the class he visits is not scheduled for a test or a library period). It is important that both teachers, the observer and the observed, share some free time after the class to discuss the lesson. And it is important that the visits occur frequently enough to develop a real exchange; otherwise the idea will degenerate into a dirty trick that colleagues play on their friends.

Each situation will differ, and it is the teacher who knows best how to arrange the schedules in his own school. But it is not so impossible as it seems. Library periods and test periods can be used to free one teacher to visit another—that is, if everyone gets into the spirit and is willing to help each other out. Two classes can be combined for a movie or a lecture, freeing one teacher to visit some other class. Perhaps, better ways of handling lunchroom duty and hall patrols can be developed so that scheduled observations will not seem an encroachment upon a teacher's cherished free time but, rather, a more professional way to spend the time now demanded of most teachers anyway. The impetus for such change will probably have to come from teachers. What teachers would be better catalysts than those privileged to spend a summer at an NDEA institute? The real job, therefore, of the NDEA institutes is to instill new vitality, enthusiasm, and ideas into discouraged teachers, who can then go back to their classrooms eager to teach in such a way as to make their students increasingly hungry for new intellectual experiences and so enthusiastic as to make their colleagues eager for new teaching ideas. But the job is hard. Many teachers will find it difficult to believe that much can be done with either students or schools. A teacher who loves literature but unconsciously hates or fears his students will not long retain his NDEA-instilled enthusiasm. And too many teachers find it hard to love children whose problems make them difficult to love. I, therefore, suggest that the institutes dealing with deprived students include contributions from sociology and psychology that will give teachers new insights into the nature and consequences of poverty and deprivation. I also suggest that the institutes provide their teachers with the repeated chance actually to teach unusual materials to classes of deprived youngsters and to be observed by the rest of the teachers while teaching. The quickest way to have one's cherished beliefs quickly altered is to see a book or a poem succeed with a class when one was sure it would never work. Even better is to try to teach that book oneself, or in a team, in front of a kindly but critical audience. I think these measures are important in order to insure against the far too prevalent reaction of teachers who return home at the end of the summer only to feel and to say out loud, "That was a marvelous summer, but, of course, none of what I learned *there* would work *here*." Instead, teachers returning refreshed from a summer institute ideally should be ready to take a new look at their students and adapt what they have gained during the summer to their classes' needs and problems. They should also be ready to work for a more stimulating teaching atmosphere in their schools. Having newly experienced the companionship of genuinely sharing teaching techniques, NDEA teachers may be eager to enlist their fellow teachers in the joint planning and teaching already discussed, which would thus enlarge the impact of the institute.

Introducing innovations will not be easy. All the old routines and administrative roadblocks will still be in place. But it is to be hoped that the summer will have injected enough new enthusiasm, insight, and determination into the teachers so that, able now to see their students as hungry for great literature and other teachers as hungry for professional companionship, they will be eager for the curricular battles that will, at last, in schools throughout the country, bring deprived youngsters a hearty intellectual diet.

Developing Writing Power in the Elementary School

Dorothy O. Saunders

The development of power in the use of language is accepted as an essential goal throughout the usual span of education. The elementary school shoulders a grave—though exciting—responsibility in this endeavor for there is no escaping the fact that what elementary teachers do to develop writing power most certainly will greatly facilitate or sharply impede the effectiveness of upper school programs. They can build a springboard—or a stumbling block.

Because standardized tests and criticism of the elementary school program are focused on the mechanics of language, it often appears the task is, or should be, merely to develop competence in the use of language. However, if what teachers do is to take a child who can write only his name, and six years later turn out one who can produce a neat, grammatical, multiparagraph article, then they have accomplished but a fraction of their goal, the development of writing power. Competence is important, of course, but it contains little impetus for further growth. This comes with the other elements of writing power: confidence in one's ability to write and eagerness to explore new ways of writing. For instance, a day's program for a third grade at the Brookmont School in Bethesda, Maryland, where I teach, assigns no special time for English but includes the following items:

Make labels for science collection
Write Mr. Waring and Mr. Roberts
Make up word problems using 3 x
Read stories (written the day before)

The teacher deals with two aspects of writing, separate and yet related. They might be arcs of a circle, each contributing to a complete writing experience. One aspect is practical, the other personal. Practical writing serves the purpose of functional communication and stems from the child's school life. For example, there are memos, letters, lists, plans, captions, reports, and records. These are all concerned with objective material which exists outside of the child and, being relatively constant, is available for review or reconsideration. They all serve utilitarian purposes, direct and functional. The other aspect of writing is personal, the stories and poems children write just for fun out of their own imagination or inner experience. The material is basically subjective and often highly elusive. The only reasons for this kind of writing are the entertainment of the class or personal satisfaction.

There are, then, two aspects of writing, one practical and realistic, the other personal and imaginative. Different in nature and purpose, they must be handled differently in the classroom. Because practical writing is direct communication, the need for accuracy and clarity is keenly felt by the child. And since it is to be read by others, courtesy as well as convention requires neatness and correctness. It is in this area that teachers bring up matters of form and technique, and develop the skills involved in each undertaking. The child is held to the highest standards he can attain.

Personal writing, however, seems to flourish best in complete freedom with no restraint of prescribed subject or required form. The child is trying merely to fashion something that will be satisfying to him or entertaining to the class. When a tale has been read to the group, the author has no further use for it—it has served its purpose. Any requirement of revision or editing could only raise a question about the true value of his invention and dull the sharp edge of his delight. Therefore in this field, teachers accept whatever a child offers regardless of its nature or appearance. By accepting the child's own form for personal writing and helping him to acquire skill in conventional forms for practical writing, they work for an integrated writing power.

The very nature of practical writing creates a need for the child to reach for the highest standards he can attain. Here is an example of a first experience in direct written communication. The teacher has written carefully, "I need sneakers for gym." The child has assumed responsibility for the communication by signing his name. His sense of the importance of this note and his pride in being able to do his part are evident in the laboriously drawn letters and the gay decoration he has added.

Months later he may be able to copy a note composed by his class. This one reads, "Dear Folks, No school Friday. Bobby." Even first graders, who need to write "Dear Folks" because writing "Dear Father and Mother" would be an exhausting task, enjoy the sense of power that comes with the ability to produce an important communication. In his desire to have his note as perfect as possible, Bobby colors the capital letters and makes a notable period and a particularly curly comma.

In the early grades before children achieve control over handwriting, it is often necessary for the teacher to be their scribe. While the actual handwriting may be hers, theirs is the responsibility for communication and for the act of composition. Their pride and delight in seeing their words take visible form is ample reward for the earnestly assumed task of finding just the right words and phrases for such demands as listing questions, captioning pictures, or recording experiences. Here is a record of an experiment composed by a group of second graders.

Snow

found out we ~~W~~hen
We all thought snow was just water. We‸were wrong/‸~~W~~e did an experiment with
gently
snow. We took a can 7½ inches high and pushed it‸into a snow bank until it was
just covered it with the snow
‸full. Then we‸~~put~~ a piece of glass over the top and waited for‸~~it~~ to melt. There was

only 1 inch of water in the can. ~~The rest was air.~~ Air filled the rest of the can. This

showed that snow is water and air.

Here the importance of accuracy has prompted revisions necessary for clarity. Note the type and number of changes made by the children and the conventional editing techniques employed by the teacher. Even young children know that the act of composition is not easy; one child spoke for the whole group when he said after a final reading, "Well, *at last* it says just what we want it to say." When writing is done for a genuine purpose and successfully accomplished, the joy in achievement is both reward and spur.

Middle grades are a period of explosive growth. Eight- and 9-year-olds are energetic, curious, highly articulate, and ready to try anything. While in first and second grades they had made spontaneous oral reports of experiences; now the element of planning is encountered when the material is not subject to the easy organization of chronology. Early individual reports draw largely on the child's own experience or knowledge so that he will feel comfortable and confident in making a selection of ideas and arranging them for presentation. For instance, third graders planned to tell each other about their hobbies. One child brought a collection of marbles and in conference with his teacher decided he would tell about the sizes and kinds of marbles he had and show some interesting ones. His teacher jotted down these three items which he later arranged in an order he thought would catch and hold the attention of his audience.

Marbles

1. Kinds
2. Sizes
3. Interesting ones

He tried out his report on a friend and then, with his list as a guide, presented his report to the class beginning, "Lots of children think marbles are just made of glass, but I have seven different kinds in my collection." The list is not a particularly impressive item judged by adult standards, but for the child it was a welcome and treasured new tool which helped him to achieve his aim more effectively.

Later, when the subject of a report needs more than first-hand knowledge, the child has use for that complex and much abused technique of note taking. This middle-grade level is a particularly congenial age in which to introduce this technique, for the children are eager to try anything new and delighted with any device that will work for them. They are eager to experiment with the amount of recall available from just one or two clue words, to see how much information can be recorded in a diagram, and to identify precise details that *should* be jotted down because no one could be expected to remember them. By making a virtue of brevity teachers discourage wholesale copying and foster integrity as a base for all note taking. Thus children encounter note taking not as a trick to be learned and demonstrated but as a much needed tool, an appreciated device which facilitates their wider exploring for information.

Many skills are needed in the writing of reports, but only one other, editing, will be considered here. Even before a child can write for himself, he should have been a party to the reshaping and refurbishing of class-composed reports such as the record of the experiment with snow. Drawing on what he has learned from frequent experiences of this sort, he is able to edit the first draft of his individual report to some extent, reading it softly to himself to use terminal voicing as a guide to the placement of those elusive periods and capitals, catching and correcting omissions, and occasionally restating an idea. But most reports need more work, so further editing is done in conference with the teacher. It is a companionable experience, and both parties concentrate eagerly on the effectiveness of the all-important report. As sometimes the child or sometimes the teacher reads orally, they discover what seems satisfactory and what obscure. The teacher, through questioning, tries to help the author to clarify his meaning and then acts as stenographer to make dictated changes. Needed punctuation is explained and added, spelling corrected. This effort is, in fact, a perfect teaching situation. The child is eager to receive help; his whole attention is focused on making his report as strong as possible. He is sensitive to praise for honest, even though sometimes crude, effort, and he is strengthened in his growth by shared pride in his accomplishment. Samples of revised reports indicate something of the varying degrees of support and assistance children may need in an editing conference. Revisions made in the conference are penciled in red, and although the child is not, of course, aware of it, they form an excellent record of the type of help he has needed. For example, one child's presentation was so confused at one point that a whole new substitute paragraph was dictated to the teacher. Another's material was so well-organized that only a few corrections of spelling were needed. A third needed help with misplaced phrases and inaccurate vocabulary. At the end of a conference, the sense that his report is as perfect as it can be fortifies the child's commitment to the final and tiresome task of making a clear copy.

Throughout the whole process of making a report, the child is keenly aware of his eventual audience. He strives for clarity because he wants to be clear to a specific person or group; he selects and organizes information for someone who is waiting to be informed. Consciousness of his audience is both guide and incentive.

A sixth grader, knowing his audience would include many with little or no knowledge of mechanical devices, began a report on the cooling system of an engine thus:

> The cooling system is used to cool the engine. It is a very necessary device for if it were missing the terrific heat built up by friction would stop the action of the cylinders. To prevent this, the walls of the cylinders are made up of hollow passages. These passages extend around the cylinders and form what is called the water jacket. You have probably seen water poured in at the front of your car. . . .

The audience provides not only guide and incentive but reward as well, for it is when a child's report is read that he can observe the success of his effort. Teachers develop a pattern of class comment directed to the effectiveness of a report, not to its length and certainly not to comparison with others. Because they are engaged in similar endeavors, classmates are usually generous and perceptive in their citing of specific evidences of writing power: the clear statement of an idea, accuracy of information, freshness of expression. The author knows justifiable pride in his accomplishment and is strengthened by it. This cycle of effort and success is both memorable and energizing.

From first to sixth grade at Brookmont there is a steady accumulation of experience with practical writing—writing which is needed and important, not only reports but also the caption to identify a picture, the explanatory label for a science exhibit, the letter requesting permission to go on a field trip, the plan for a play, the record of a special experience, and so forth. Because these writing exercises serve genuine functional purposes, the need for clarity and accuracy is readily accepted by the authors; because they will be read by others, correctness and neatness are obvious necessities. In these situations writing standards take on meaning and children are willing to invest the time and energy necessary to attain good results. Finding techniques effective, often to their naïve delight, they incorporate them confidently into their own writing.

Practical writing is, however, only one aspect of the writing program. The other, personal writing, is equally important. This is the writing children do just to entertain their group or satisfy themselves. The purposes are so different from those of practical writing that a different approach is indicated. Here there are no limitations of topic or form. The child is free to write whatever he wishes, sure that his product will be accepted with warm appreciation.

While the forms of practical writing are many, those of personal writing are usually only two: stories and poems. Just as the preliminary steps in practical writing are necessarily confined to telling and dictating, so also stories are dictated or told until the child has achieved some competence in handwriting. Fortunately little children enjoy this form of self-expression and seem to need only the opportunity to launch themselves into the activity. With the first story the teacher establishes a pattern of acceptance, banning all negative criticism and allowing only appreciative comment. The assurance of such a reception makes it possible for even a timid child to try telling a tale.

First stories are, as might be expected, often vague and formless, but the approving remarks of the class and the simple dynamism of experience gradually turn the children toward more compact tales. The following is one dictated by a first grader, and written for him by his teacher on a large sheet of wide-lined paper.

The Reds and the Blues

Once upon a time there was a big forest and in every tree in that forest there lived a cardinal. In the hollow of each tree there lived a mouse. Now the cardinals had quite a problem. The mice loved to play basketball and they threw the ball too high and kept knocking the cardinals' nests down.

Rarely does a story appear in black and white without an announcement by the author that he plans to dictate more and more stories. Indeed, a siege of dictated stories usually follows. Little children seem to have an inexhaustible supply of subjects for stories: a mouse with a short tail, a runaway pocket, notes that ran away from a music book, a tiger so small he was mistaken for a chipmunk, an Easter bunny who used red socks to dye eggs pink, a toad who was sick and tired of his name. Not all are as beguiling as these; many are weak stories at best.

The following story was dictated by a first grader.

White Paws

Once there was a kitten named White Paws because, of course, he *had* white paws. Well, one day he jumped on the desk and knocked a bottle of ink on the floor. And he walked all around in the ink and all over the carpet. So they had to call him Black Paws and he had to stay outside.

In an atmosphere of warm appreciation even a feeble tale wins for its author a sense of power and whets his appetite for further attempts of this sort.

Occasionally a young child attempts to write his own story, but the laborious and fatiguing task of writing usually limits sharply his invention. The following was written by a 6-year-old.

October

Once there was a big bold black lion and he roared and roardeb. Amy

Amy's delight in her tale is evident from the manner in which she persevered in copying it, using a different crayon for each letter. But even Amy found the task exhausting as the ragged and confused writing at the end attests. (The title, "October," and the decoration, a lollipop tree with gay fall foliage, are disconcerting features only to adults!)

As children gain an increasing control over handwriting, they assume eagerly the writing of their own stories. The teachers at Brookmont are most careful to accept them in whatever form they appear. Most of the writing indicates clearly the desperate effort of hand to keep pace with racing imagination; much of the spelling is unconventional. Some children use ordinary writing paper, others staple a few sheets of plain paper together to form a "book," or write on assorted sizes and shapes of paper; some stories appear on bundles of three-by-five cards, others in copy books. But the aim of this kind of writing is to entertain. What the child seeks to produce and what the audience keenly anticipates, is a *story;* the physical appearance of the tale is totally unimportant.

A fan-folded piece of drawing paper contained this brief but satisfactory story by a 7-year-old.

There was a prod lion who wanted a hair cut. So he went to the barbur and got his hair cut. And when he came out he looked ridickolus and nobody was scared. The End

A rather grubby copy book presented by a fourth grader carried the title, "How to Be a Witch in Ten Easy Lessons" and had chapters on how to ride a broom, cast spells, haunt a house, and screech. One chapter contained a witch's alphabet. It began:

A is for apple, rotten apple
B is for bats and black, black bats
C is for cat, a witch's pal
D is for devil, a witch's husband . . .

And concluded:

X is for X marks the spot (where the black gold is hidden)
Y is for yeak, a witch's scream at night
Z is zooks, gadzooks.

A bundle of cards held this story written by 8-year-old Peggy.

Grandmothers Skirt

Once there lived an old laddy with gray hair, dubble toes and a very sweet hart but she allways fell down becase her peticoat was allways hanging. She lived all alown way, way on the tip top of a great big hill one of her hobies was baking pies blueberry chery and apple were her very best. The only one in all the world that she loved was her own grandbaby who hardly ever came to see her. Today however she was in her living room when a nock came at the door. She jumpd and ran to see who was comeing. She opund the door and to her serprize no one was there she was all setled down again when another nock came. Again she went to the door and there she saw her grandbaby whose mother had got run over she had taken lots of monny so she could live with her grandmother and they bilt a new house and were very happy. After that the grandbaby allways held up her grandmothers peticoat and she never fell

If textbook standards are applied to this, it is a woefully poor story containing all sorts of extraneous details, an unexplained incident, outrageous spelling, and inadequate punctuation. But Peggy knew her audience and the tale was written to entertain: Food is always a splendid thing to have in any story, surprises are fun even when unexplained, "dubble toes" are fascinating, and the problem of the troublesome petticoat was resolved. The audience was enchanted, talked over the delicious details, and warmly approved the way the author took care of the petticoat. Not only did Peggy announce that she had many and better stories in mind, but other children, tempted by the fun of her success, began to anticipate the next writing opportunity.

Abundance of writing is the primary goal and because a warm friendly reception awaits every tale, the teachers get quantities of stories. Volume, at this point in a child's development, is vitally important. Just beginning to feel a sense of power over language and invention, he needs unlimited opportunity to explore and experiment. His delighted experimentation often reminds me of a colt's prancing, cavorting, dashing, pirouetting in a new pasture. Just as a colt may roll in the grass, so a child fairly wallows in language in a delighted seeking of its value. This expansive freedom to write holds a real potential for growth, for the more the child writes the more his imagination is stirred and stretched. In addition, each time one of his stories is read, the author observes the natural reactions of his audience and discovers what of his tale truly caught their attention. Their approving comments, and those of his teacher, further identify those elements that were enjoyed. Thus the child learns how to fashion his stories, and those features teachers used to urge, even demand—a good beginning sentence, descriptive details—emerge naturally as parts of his own writing power.

Children learn to write by writing; this is certainly true, but they also learn to write by listening. For every time a child is author-reader, he is many times a listener, part of an audience gathered not to judge but to enjoy a story. As he seeks what is good in another's tale, he becomes increasingly sensitive to vital components of story design and inevitably appropriates what is suitable for his own efforts. The audience-story teller situation is a two-way street for real growth.

This story, written by Peggy, author of "Grandmothers Skirt," indicates the growth that can take place in a year when children are really concerned with the art of story telling. (Spelling and punctuation have been corrected to facilitate reading.)

The House That Echoed

Once there was a sweet old lady who lived all alone with her parrot in a huge, big house with 143 rooms. She might have been a happy lady but she wasn't because whenever she said anything she heard an echo. There were echoes in every room. When she said, 'Good morning, Polly,' she heard high and whispery, 'Good morning, Polly.'

(The echo was always written very small.)

When the parrot said, 'Polly wants a cracker,' the little old lady would hear, 'Cracker, cracker, cracker,' echoing all over the house.

She was determined to stop the echoes and live happy ever after. She sent for some men to come out from the city and put hangings on all the walls of the 143 rooms.

But when the men had gone she said, 'Well, now *that's* fixed.' All through the house she heard, 'Fixed, fixed, fixed.'

'What shall I do?' cried the sweet old lady. 'I know. I'll open all the windows and doors and then the echoes will slip outdoors.' So she opened and opened all the windows and all the doors in the 143 rooms.

'*Now* I won't be bothered any more,' she said with a sigh settling down.

'Any more, any more, any more,' whispered the echoes.

'Oh, oh, oh,' cried the little old lady and she ran outdoors into the woods. She walked and walked trying to think what to do next when suddenly she heard an awful crying. She ran through the woods and found a whole lot of children, 439 children, all sitting in the woods, crying.

'Goodness gracious,' said the little old lady. 'What are you crying about?'

'We used to live in an orphan but it burned down,' said a boy.

'Well, blow your noses and come home with me,' said the little old lady.

So they did and all those children filled the house so full of noise because of pillow fights and not wanting to wash, especially the boys, and asking where things were, that there wasn't any room for echoes at all. And the old lady was happy. So were the children. The End

What do they write about when they are given complete freedom? Not any of the subjects that for years were listed in the hope of provoking an urge to creativity: Adventures of a Penny, My Pet, A Surprise. Chiefly they write about themselves; this is what they know best, but they disguise their characters as animals to prevent any identification. They create a world for their invention which is distinctly a child's world, an eminently satisfactory world where magic and commonplace are melded, where children rather than adults are the doers of great deeds, where grown-ups prove to be quite incompetent and suffer all sorts of humiliations and difficulties, usually at the hands of children. It is interesting to note that, almost without exception, at the very end of the story, everyday order is restored and mischievous children are punished. Sometimes a number of children may invent stories about the same characters. A family of bears has proved to be an astonishingly effective vehicle for the imagination of countless children over a long period of time. To the original family, numerous relatives and neighbors have been added as they played parts in new episodes. The following, written by a 10-year-old, is one of dozens of bear stories.

> Father Bear brought home a box of candy for Mother Bear. It was all done up in fancy paper with a big bow on top.
>
> 'Oh, how exciting!' said Mrs. Bear. 'You shouldn't have done it, dear.' She bent over the box and began to undo the wrapping. 'It is thrilling, just thrilling,' she murmured.
>
> The reason she was so excited was that Mr. Bear had never brought her a box of candy before, that is not since they were married and that was fifteen years ago. She was in such good humor that she gave each of the five little bears two candies. Then, as it was nine o'clock, she put the box in the kitchen and sent the children to bed.
>
> When they got upstairs, the little bears began to get hungry.
>
> 'I want another candy,' said Eenie. . . .

(The little bears steal and eat the candy.)

> Later that night Mrs. Bear went into the kitchen to get a piece of candy. She opened the box.
>
> 'What's this?' exclaimed Mrs. Bear. 'No candy? Who could have taken it? It must have been those scamps.' She made for the stairs.

'Since you don't know for sure they did it, forget it, and I'll buy you another box anyway,' said Mr. Bear who *hated* fusses.

Mr. and Mrs. Bear were awakened out of a sound sleep in the middle of the night by a groaning sound in the five bears' room.

'So you have a stomach ache! I thought so.' said Mrs. Bear.

'We didn't really mean to take the–' began Mo but before he could finish Mrs. Bear had rushed out of the room for some awful tasting medicine.

Children in late fifth or sixth grades still write about animals with human characteristics, but they are also concerned with spacemen, cowboys, inventions with miraculous capabilities, and children who excel in sports. Years of listening to stories, seeking what was effective in them, and observing what in their own stories stirred an audience, have brought these upper graders a considerable power over those techniques that give vitality to a tale. Sometimes the indication of an individual writing style appears. Here are the beginnings of two stories written about a family of otters, Tall, Middle-Size, Small, and the baby, Tiny. One fifth-grade author writes crisply, the other in a gentle musing fashion.

Small Gets a Haircut

'Why does everything have to happen to me?' Small sighed. 'Huh! I don't need a haircut. Women are so silly, always thinking little boys need haircuts. Well, here I am. Should I go in or should I stay out? Oh, I might as well go in.'

He walked slowly into George Goat's barbershop. 'I want a crow cut,' he announced.

'Don't you mean a crew cut?' asked the attendant.

'Nope,' said Small, 'I mean a crow cut, just like crows wear.'

The attendant finally got Small settled in the chair. 'Now you say you want a crew cut,' he began.

'A crow cut,' said Small firmly.

At the Fair

One sunny morning the Otter family started for the fair. As soon as Tiny was tired, Mr. Otter picked her up and carried her. It was plain that Tiny was Mr. Otter's favorite for nobody likes to have all boys, however nice they may be. After all, one likes to have at least one of a different sex.

> Finally they reached the fairgrounds. Small shrieked with delight when he saw the ferris wheel, Tall and Middle-Size acted more grown-up than Small but they were pleased, nevertheless. Tiny could not go on the ferris wheel as she was still a baby but she did not seem to know what she was missing and gurgled and cooed all the time.

Even at the end of sixth grade, much of the writing is crude and experimental, yet it has vigor and authority developed from long experience with honest attempts to entertain. Here are two stories written by 12-year-olds, the first (only a paragraph is quoted) designed as "a real horror thriller."

> Far off, seeming to come from the end of the valley sounded a low roar which woke everyone in the house, even Pops, who usually snored through everything. Jack first sat straight up in bed and then as the sound grew louder, dashed to the window. Something, something with huge glowing eyes was coming swiftly down the road but the roar didn't seem to come from the creature, whatever it was, but was sort of floating along in a kind of free way above everything.

Escape

> In a small smoky room, two cigarettes are burning. Smoke coming from two mouths puffing away.
> Someone at the foot of the stairs!
> Open the window. Toss out the cigarettes. Fan the smoke out of the window.
> All's clear.
> 'Steven, Jim, what are you doing?'
> 'Just tidying up the bedroom. Down in a minute.'
> 'Are you smoking up there?'
> 'No, mother, we aren't.'

A second form of personal writing is poetry, which flourishes in the early years of elementary school. The graphic and lyrical language of the young child is a natural accompaniment to this age when he is reaching out to embrace all the new sensations of his life. There are so many sensations to be savored, so many new ideas to ponder. The expression of his reaction to these new insights is often rhythmic and vivid. Poetry it may not be by any exact definition, but poetic it surely is.

Here is a sampling of poems written by a class of 7- and 8-year-olds the morning after a spectacular thunderstorm had raged just at their bedtime. They arrived at school bubbling with excitement and eager to tell what they had felt and thought during the storm. I made use of the flexibility of our program to suggest that we might right then catch our impressions with paint or words. When the group was settled, children who wanted to tell poetry ideas came one or two at a time to a quiet corner to dictate to me. Not all children chose this form of expression, but many found delight in trying to capture their feelings in words.

Zig-zag lightning,
You are so fast
You make everything look surprised—
Even me!

Lightning,
Who made you?
Did some great giant
Write you with a flashing pen?
Did he?

Lightning way up in the sky
I wonder how you pass by
I wonder how you fly.

(Rhyme is a sophisticated technique far beyond the ability of young children. Attempts to use it produce only meaningless jingles.)

Lightning I'm not afraid of you
For I know what you are.
But the little stars are scared;
They hide behind the clouds
And the mother moon stays with them.

Who scratched the sky?
Last night some clumsy giant cat
Roared over the edge of night
And blackly reached his giant paw
To scratch with gold the sky.

Dark isn't dark
In a thunder storm
It can crack open
With light much too bright,
It can shake and shiver with light,
But when the storm is gone,
Dark is dark again
Quiet and black again.

Much of what they dictate or write is crude and clumsy. Some is movingly vivid or revealing. All is graciously received and given a carefully staged presentation to the class. But the poem is not the important thing. What we want for the children is the experience of searching beyond the common and easily accessible patterns for their own innermost thoughts, of feeling the delight that comes with the creation of something uniquely one's own.

An 8-year-old recalls seeing cardinals in the spring.

From the very tip top of the pine
A cardinal called to his maiden
And I thought he said,
'It's spring again,
Time for nests again,
Time for eggs and little wee birds again.
Do you remember?'
And the maiden sitting high in her tree
Sang to him sweetly, 'I do,
Of *course,* I do.
Let's get busy.'

Other 8-year-olds write:

Oh, Moon above me
Where do you go
When you are gone?
Do you go visiting?
Make the next person
On your visiting list
Be me!

What is gloom?
Gloom is a sticky, messy day,
Gloom is a disappointment,
Gloom is a misunderstanding.

The tide is coming in
So silently and swiftly
With little white-capped waves
Diving with it.
Soon it will go out again
And leave the wet sand behind.
The birds will swerve down
And fill themselves
With delicious gifts from the sea.

Dawn

The stars have blinked off
Their lights
And for a moment
Everything is still.
Then suddenly a strange light
Covers the earth.
It is dawn!
The sun peeks its head
From under the sea.
Waves crash on the shore.
The world is waking
From the night's spell.

It is interesting to note that although many children dictate or write poetry during the first four years of elementary school, only a few continue in the later years. The reasons for this lessening of lyrical expression are not clearly established. A growing awareness of adult standards may account for it in part. The crowding of activities in all fields of the curriculum may be a contributing factor. Or it may be merely that this is a time when children are more concerned with fact than reflection. Many who have had a happy experience with poetry writing in the early years turn again to this outlet in high school.

Although I have discussed practical and personal writing as separate parts of the writing experience, they are not, of course, mutually exclusive. Indeed, when the realistic requirements of the one and the artistic freedom of the other are faithfully respected, they become increasingly supportive. The mechanics learned in practical writing begin to appear in personal writing while the freshness and vitality of the latter touch with individuality even quite prosaic material. What finally emerges is a fused writing power firmly based on the child's confidence in his own real ability to write. With this sort of power, he should be able to move from elementary school, competent and expectant, ready and eager for new worlds to explore.